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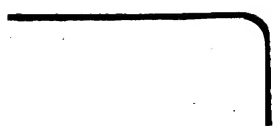
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B.O. 9

HISTORY

OF THE

CATHOLIC ARCHBISHOPS OF DUBLIN,

SINCE THE REFORMATION.

BY

THE REV. DR. MORAN,

VICE-RECTOR OF THE IRISH COLLEGE, ROME.

VOL. I.—PART I.

INTRODUCTION.

DUBLIN :

JAMES DUFFY, 15, WELLINGTON-QUAY;

LONDON: 22, PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1864.

PRICE THREE SHILLINGS.

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TO THE
VENERABLE CHAPTER AND THE CATHOLIC CLERGY,
Secular and Regular,
OF THE
DIOCESE OF DUBLIN.

HAVING completed, after long and careful researches, the first volume of the History of the Catholic Archbishops of Dublin since the Reformation, I take the liberty of dedicating it to you, as a proof of my profound respect and veneration for the virtues and merits by which you are distinguished—virtues and merits which may be considered as hereditary, having been handed down to you by your illustrious predecessors in the ministry, who laboured so assiduously for the preservation of religion, and contributed so largely to the triumph of the true faith in Ireland,—thus securing for our country a name glorious among the Catholic nations of the earth.

During the period treated of in the part of the first volume now about to appear, the ancient church of Dublin passed through the most trying ordeal and suffered the severest persecutions, whilst at the same time it was deprived of the protection and guidance of legitimate chief pastors; but, through the zeal and devotedness of the Metropolitan Chapter and Clergy,

the flock was preserved from the ravages of heresy and the poison of error.

Intruded, in the year 1535, by Henry VIII., into the see of St. Laurence, without canonical election or sanction, Dr. Brown, previously an agent of Cranmer, and imbued with his heterodox opinions, employed all his influence and energy for nearly twenty years in laying waste and plundering the fold of Christ, and in vain attempts to pervert the Catholics of Dublin.

His career of rapine and destruction having been brought to an end, another Englishman, Hugh Curwin, though he had previously given his adhesion to the usurped supremacy of Henry VIII., was promoted to the metropolitan see of Leinster by Queen Mary, in the delusive hope that he would contribute to protect the true religion; but after a short episcopate of about three years, when Elizabeth came to the throne, that unhappy man betrayed the trust placed in him, returned to the principles which he had professed many years before, and preferring the smiles of the court to the discharge of his solemn engagements, fell away miserably from the faith.

When this apostate's unworthy conduct rendered it necessary to translate him to an English reformed see, Elizabeth, in the exercise of a power received from man, not from God, deputed another Englishman, Dr. Loftus, one of her own favourites, to establish the reformation in Dublin—a task to which he devoted himself for nearly forty years, manifesting in all his proceedings a spirit of avarice and rapacity, and a deeply-rooted hatred of everything Irish and Catholic, and marking his career by persecution and bloodshed, in a way sufficient to prove that he was no minister of the Gospel of charity.

After a vacancy of almost seventy years, during which the See of Dublin groaned under the usurped authority of the three first Protestant bishops, who, without any spiritual jurisdiction,

and as mere government agents, enjoyed its temporalities, Catholic prelates were again, through the paternal providence of the Roman Pontiffs, appointed to govern the diocese; but such was the violence of persecution near the seat of government, that for more than a century after the death of Elizabeth, the canonically appointed archbishops died either in prison or exile.

Whilst heathens had thus come into the inheritance of the Lord, and defiled His holy temple, and poured the blood of the faithful as water round about Jerusalem, is it not a source of great glory to the Chapter and Clergy of Dublin, that during those sad times they watched over and defended their flocks with heroic fortitude and self-sacrifice, and preserved them from all the open and perfidious assaults of their enemies. Though left without the watchful care and spiritual guidance of a bishop, and deprived of every earthly possession, and subject to the terror of penal laws, with the sword always hanging over their heads, nothing could make them flinch from duty, or consent to obey man rather than God. In his correspondence with the government, the great father of the reformation in Ireland, Dr. Brown, was repeatedly obliged to confess that he scarcely found an adherent amongst the Chapter and Clergy of Dublin, and that their courage and constancy rendered it impossible for him to carry out his views; and, at a later period, Dr. Loftus often declared that there was no chance of establishing Protestantism in your Metropolis except by stringent penal laws and persecution.

Is it not also a glorious privilege of the children of St. Laurence, that, whilst defending religion in their own district, they contributed largely to its preservation in other dioceses? One of the most heroic defenders of the faith in the days of Elizabeth was Dr. Leverous, dean of St. Patrick's, who, whilst retaining

that dignity, governed the diocese of Kildare and preserved it from the contagion of heresy. At the same period a dean of Christ's Church was Bishop of the faithful Catholics of Kerry; a priest of Dublin holding a parish in that city governed the diocese of Leighlin; and, a little later, a vicar of St. Mary's was Apostolic administrator of the diocese of Raphoe.

When the prayers of the faithful were at length heard, and God, who commands the winds and the waves and changes the hearts of princes, had restored peace to the Irish Church, were the Chapter and Clergy of Dublin found wanting to their ancient traditions, or did they show themselves unworthy of their glorious predecessors? On the contrary, as soon as persecution had ceased, they displayed the greatest energy in building up the walls of Jerusalem, and collecting the scattered stones of the sanctuary. How many beautiful churches now adorn your City and diocese? How many schools have you established? How many colleges, convents, and monasteries have sprung up under your fostering care? And, above all, what an impulse have you not given to deeds of piety and charity, and to the practice of every Christian virtue and good work.

Besides, how many zealous missionaries have been sent from among you to found or adorn new and distant Churches? Do not the archiepiscopal sees of Baltimore, St. Louis, and Halifax, and the episcopal sees of Toronto and Chicago, in America; of Capetown and Grahamstown, in Africa; of Adelaide and Queensland, in Australia; and of Bombay, in Asia, owe an immense debt of gratitude to Dublin for supplying them with pastors, who have rendered great services to them in the past, or are still toiling for their welfare? amongst whom may be mentioned one whose loss we had so lately to deplore, Dr. Kenrick, the Archbishop of Baltimore, whose name will be

ever in benediction in the Church of God, and whose works are a standing monument of his learning and piety.

Let me, then, conclude by again offering to you the work in which I am engaged; and which is closely connected with the history of the Chapter and Clergy of Dublin, though principally directed to describe the lives of those Prelates who presided over your diocese, and who fought the good fight, and preserved the faith. I regret the work is not more worthy of your acceptance. However, it contains many facts that will serve to illustrate the origin of Protestantism, and to show that it was propagated by violence, confiscation of property, penal laws, and cruel persecutions, and that the principal agents employed to establish it in Ireland, were men remarkable for their avarice and rapacity, their cruelty and immorality. What a contrast does its history present with that of the early Christians, who propagated the faith of Christ by prayer, by good works, by submitting to persecution, by deeds of charity, and by returning good for evil; not by force, or the confiscation of the property of others, or the terror of cruel laws! What a contrast, also, between the conduct of the first reformers in Ireland and the lives of your predecessors, who, in patience and suffering, preserved the lamp of faith during the long night of persecution, and who edified the world by their constancy and courage, and by the odour of their virtues, handing down a glorious inheritance, which your piety and zeal will, in turn, transmit pure and unsullied to future generations!

In fine, I trust that the chronological series of the Irish Catholic Bishops, during the reign of Elizabeth, given in the Appendix to this Introduction, will convince the learned and impartial Very Rev. Dr. Todd that he was mistaken when he asserted, in his preface to the life of St. Patrick,

that in the sixteenth century, "the original Irish Church, properly so called, having merged into the church of the English pale, adopted the Reformation." The most authentic records of history which we have consulted, show that the general series of Catholic Bishops was never interrupted in Ireland; that the Catholic Bishops of the pale, as well as those of every other part of the kingdom, were faithful to their trust, and "never adopted the Reformation;" and that the Protestant Bishops who were intruded into Irish sees had no claim to apostolical succession, and no right to episcopal jurisdiction, having derived whatever powers they possessed from mere secular authority, and from a most corrupt source, the despotic enactments of Henry VIII. and Queen Elizabeth. Through the protection of Heaven, and the intercession of the Blessed Virgin and St. Patrick, the Catholic people of Ireland and their clergy have always been faithful to their religion; and confiscation of property and penal laws, and persecution, and the sword, have been in vain employed to separate them from the rock of Peter, and from the true faith, which overcometh the world.

With profound respect,

I have the honor to be

Your very obedient servant,

P. F. MORAN.

Irish College, St. Agatha, Rome,

Feast of the Circumcision of our Lord, 1864.

HISTORY
OF THE
CATHOLIC ARCHBISHOPS OF DUBLIN
SINCE THE REFORMATION.

TO THE READER.

THE following introductory chapters may be found useful, in preparing the reader for the perusal of the history of the holy and illustrious Irish Catholic Archbishops who filled the see of Dublin since the Reformation. In this introduction, the first attempts to root out the ancient religion of Ireland, the unworthy arts by which the Catholic Church was assailed, and the evil effects of the Reformation, are briefly described, and a sketch is given of the long and cruel persecutions which our forefathers, emulating the constancy of the early Christians, so gloriously suffered for their faith, in the days of Henry VIII. and Queen Elizabeth. The sad condition to which the confiscation of Catholic property, the destruction of colleges and monasteries, the dispersion of the clergy, violence and penal laws—the offspring of a cruel and hypocritical despotism—had reduced our country at that period, will explain why the see of Dublin was so long deprived of pastors during the sixteenth century. At the same time every Irish Catholic, when considering the calamities which fell on our country in

the unhappy days of the Reformation, cannot but be filled with gratitude to God, for having preserved our ancient and venerable Church, from the destruction with which she was menaced by so many powerful and perfidious enemies; and having protected her in a miraculous manner, through centuries of darkness and desolation. The goodness of God, the power of faith, that victory which overcometh the world, were never more fully displayed than in the period to which we refer. The introduction is divided into four chapters:—

1. The first efforts of the English government to introduce the Reformation into Ireland.

2. The appointment of Hugh Curwin to the see of Dublin, and his apostacy.

3. Vacancy of the see after the apostacy of Curwin, and how the diocese was administered until the end of the sixteenth century.

4. Persecution of the Irish Catholics during the reign of Elizabeth.

To these chapters we add an APPENDIX, containing an account of the succession of the Catholic bishops in the various sees of Ireland during the reign of Elizabeth. The facts stated in this appendix will show, that the succession of our Irish Catholic bishops has remained unbroken, that the people of Ireland never abandoned the true faith, and that the theories of Dr. Mant, and of Dr. Todd in his late life of St. Patrick, on this subject, are without foundation.

INTRODUCTION.

CHAPTER I.

FIRST EFFORTS OF THE ENGLISH GOVERNMENT TO INTRODUCE PROTESTANTISM INTO IRELAND.

1. Mission of the Protestant Archbishop Dr. Browne to the Irish Catholics.—
2. Royal Supremacy sanctioned by Parliament, 1536-7.—3. Other Acts of Parliament in favour of the Reformation.—4. Zeal of the Protestant Archbishop in the same cause : Destruction of Crosses, Images, Relics, Church Ornaments, and the Crozier of St. Patrick.—5. Suppression of Monasteries.—
6. Sufferings of Religious Orders.—7. Other efforts of Government to promote the Reformation.—8. Character of Reformers in Ireland.—9. Reformation fails in Ireland under Henry VIII.

1.—*Mission of Doctor George Browne to the Irish Catholics.*

AN English Augustinian friar, by name George Browne, was the individual chosen by Henry the Eighth to unfurl in Ireland the standard of revolt against the authority of the Holy See. Dr. Browne had been for many years a courtier of the English monarch, and for some time before his advancement to the see of Dublin, had held the lucrative post of confidential agent of archbishop Cranmer. He, moreover, enjoyed the friendship of lord Cromwell, and in 1534 formed part of a commission specially destined to prepare the way in Ireland for the important step of *reformation*, then contemplated by Henry. This commission, indeed, was in many respects a complete failure; nevertheless, it obtained one result, which was hailed by the courtiers with all the joy of a glorious triumph—that, forsooth, the earl of Ossory and his son, when entering on the government of the counties of Kilkenny, Waterford, and Tipperary, in the month of May, 1534, should consent to pledge themselves “to resist the usurpation of the bishop of Rome,” and assign, as the cause of all the evils which then pressed heavily upon our

island, "the manner in which the Pope had exercised his authority in filling up the Irish benefices."*

The vacancy of the archiepiscopal see of Dublin, caused by the assassination of Dr. Allen, in July, 1534, presented a favourable opportunity of testing what blessings might result to our church, by setting aside the privilege of the Roman Pontiff, and filling up the Irish sees by the sole authority of the English crown. Accordingly, in the beginning of March, 1535, we find Dr. Browne appointed by Henry to the diocese of Dublin; a few days later, without receiving any confirmation from Rome,† he was consecrated by Cranmer, and, moreover, in compliance with the schismatical act lately passed in the English parliament, the new prelate received—not from the tombs of the apostles, but from the archbishop of Canterbury‡—the pallium and other insignia of his high dignity.

It is a great error of some writers to reckon Dr. Browne amongst the Catholic successors of St. Laurence O'Toole.§ He had no more claim to the title of Catholic archbishop of Dublin than has Dr. Whately at the present day.¶ Even Ussher, in his sketch of the early career of Dr. Browne, attributes his favour with the king to his having rejected the doctrines of Rome; and Dr. Mant describes him before his appointment to the see of Dublin, as a man "whose mind was happily freed from the thralldom of popery," whilst he adds, that "the arrival of the archbishop in his diocese was the first step taken by the reformation in Ireland."¶

Were further evidence required on this head, we would find it in the letter of king Henry to the archbishop on the 7th of July, 1537, from which we give some extracts, as it clearly

* State Pap. See Haverty, "History of Ireland," page 360.

† Haverty, page 378, well remarks that Browne, at the time he was consecrated, was *a professing Protestant*.

‡ Harris's Ware, page 348.

§ Dr. Browne himself, writing to Cromwell on 8th of January, 1538 (State Pap., vol. ii. p. 539), says, "it hath pleased his most excellent highness (the king) through your good lordship's preferment, to make me under his grace, a spiritual officer, and chief over the clergy;" and again, "there is never an archbishop nor bishop but myself, *made by the king*, but he is repelled even now by provision."

¶ A MS. notice of our Irish bishops, written in 1579, and preserved in the Vatican, describes the see of Dublin as vacant since the death of its archbishop in the reign of Henry VIII. *Per obitum epi. tempore Henrici Regis.*"

¶ "Hist. of the Church of Ireland," vol. i. pp. 111, 112.

traces the true source of the mission of this first English Protestant bishop to the Irish church:—

“Right reverend father in God, trusty and well-beloved, we greet you well, signifying unto you, that whereas *before your promotion and advancement to that order, dignity, and authority of an archbishop, you showed an appearance of such entire zeal and affection*, as well to the setting forth and preaching the sincere word of God, and avoiding of all superstition used against the honour of the same, as to employ yourself always diligently, for your part, to procure the good furtherance of any of our affairs, as much as in you lay, and might appear to be to our contentment and satisfaction, that thinking your mind to be so earnestly fixed upon the same that you would persevere and continue still in that your good purpose: . . . do then your duty towards us in the advancement of our affairs there, and in the signification hither, from time to time, of the state of the same, and we shall put your former negligence in oblivion. If this will not serve to induce you to it, but that you will still so persevere in your fond folly and ungrateful ungentleness, that you cannot remember what we have done, and how much above many others you be bound in all the points before touched, to do your duty, let it sink into your remembrance, that we be as able for the not doing thereof, *to remove you again and to put another man of more virtue and honesty in your place*, both for our discharge against God, and for the comfort of our good subjects there, *as we were at the beginning to prefer you*, upon hope that you would in the same do your office, as to your profession, and our opinion conceived of you, appertaineth.”—(State Papers, vol. ii. p. 465.)

2.—*The Royal Supremacy receives the sanction of Parliament, 1536-7.*

Soon after his arrival in Ireland, Dr. Browne received a formal letter from lord Cromwell, acquainting him with “the royal will and pleasure of his majesty, that his subjects in Ireland, even as those of England, should obey his commands in spiritual matters as in temporal, and renounce their allegiance to the see of Rome.” At the same time a new commission was formed, and the archbishop was appointed one of its chief members, for carrying into effect his majesty’s desires.*

The reply of the archbishop sets forth the difficulty of carrying such a scheme into effect, on account of the devoted

* See “The Phoenix,” or Collection of “Scarce and Valuable Pieces,” printed in London, 1707, vol. i. number 5. “The Life and Death of George Browne,” written by Robert Ware. The same life is inserted in the English edition of sir James Ware’s *Annals*, between the reigns of Mary and Elizabeth.

attachment of our island to the chair of Peter; and suggests as the only remedy, the convening of a new parliament. His letter is as follows:—*

“MY MOST HONOURED LORD—Your humble servant, receiving your mandate as one of his highness's commissioners, hath endeavoured, almost to the danger and hazard of his temporal life, to procure the nobility and gentry of this nation to due obedience in owning of his highness their supreme head, as well spiritual as temporal, and do find much oppugning therein, especially by my brother Armagh,† who hath been the main oppugner, and so hath withdrawn most of his suffragans and clergy within his see and jurisdiction. He made a speech to them, laying a curse on the people whosoever should own his highness's supremacy, saying, that isle—as it is in their Irish chronicles, *insula sacra*—belongs to none but the bishop of Rome, and that it was the bishop of Rome that gave it to the king's ancestors. There be two messengers, by the priests of Armagh and by that archbishop, now lately sent to the bishop of Rome. Your lordship may inform his highness that it is convenient to call a parliament in this nation, to pass the supremacy by act; for they do not much matter his highness's commission, which your lordship sent us over. This island hath been for a long time held in ignorance by the Romish orders. . . . The common people of this isle are more zealous in their blindness than the saints and martyrs were in truth, at the beginning of the Gospel. I send to you, my very good lord, these things, that your lordship and his highness may consult what is to be done. It is feared O'Neill will be ordered by the bishop of Rome to oppose your lordship's order from the king's highness; for the natives are very much in numbers within his powers. I do pray the Lord Christ to defend your lordship from your enemies.—Dublin, 4th Kal. Dec., 1535.”

The suggestion here made by Dr. Browne, that a parliament should be held, to give a more solemn sanction to the innovations in religion, was warmly approved of by the king; and preparatory to it, the lord deputy set out on a *martial course*, as it is styled by sir John Davies, and a *victorious circuit round about the kingdom*. Most of the Irish septs, weakened by intestine troubles, and terrified by the imposing army now at the deputy's command, hastened to meet him and make their submission to the government. Matters being thus prepared, continues sir John Davies, “he propounded and passed in parliament those laws which made the great alteration in the state ecclesiastical.”

* Phoenix, loc. cit. pag. 121; Harleian Miscel., etc.

† George Cromer, archbishop of Armagh.

The parliament was summoned in 1536, and the chief bill presented for discussion enacted:

“That the king, his heirs and successors, should be the supreme head on earth of the Church of Ireland, and should have power and authority, from time to time, to visit, reform, restrain, and amend all such errors, heresies, abuses, offences, contempts, and enormities, whatsoever they be, which, by any manner, spiritual authority, or jurisdiction, ought or may lawfully be reformed, restrained, or amended, most to the pleasure of Almighty God, the increase of virtue in Christ’s religion, and for the conservation of peace, unity, and tranquillity of this land of Ireland; any usage, custom, foreign laws, foreign authority, prescription, etc., notwithstanding.”*

Another bill withdrew all appeals in spiritual causes from the tribunal of Rome, and vested them in the crown; whilst other acts were directly levelled against the authority of the Holy See, declaring it *an usurped authority*, and forbidding all persons, under penalty of *præmunire*, “to extol or maintain by writing, or any act,” the jurisdiction of the Holy Father within the realm of Ireland. At the same time, the justices of the peace received instructions to examine into all offences against this act, as into “other offences against the king’s peace.” An oath of supremacy was imposed on all ecclesiastical and lay officers, and it was, in fine, declared that an obstinate refusal to take this oath “should be punished as high treason.”†

Archbishop Browne was, of course, the active agent of the government in seeking to engage the sanction of parliament for these acts. His biographer has handed down the speech made by him on this occasion, and we give it as an illustration of the servility of this courtier, whilst we, at the same time, fully agree with Dr. Mant (otherwise a panegyrist of the archbishop), that it is more remarkable for brevity *than for deep argument or rhetorical display*:—‡

“My lords and gentry of this his majesty’s realm of Ireland, behold, your obedience to your king is the observing of your God and Saviour Christ; for He, that High Priest of our souls, paid tribute to Cæsar, though no Christian. Greater honour then, surely, is due to your prince, his highness the king, who is a Christian one. Rome and her bishops, in the Fathers’ days, acknowledged emperors, kings, and princes to be supreme over their dominions—nay, Christ’s own

* Irish Statut. 28th Henry VIII. chap. v. † Ib. chap. vi. and xiii.

‡ Hist. of the Irish Ch. vol. i. p. 117.

vicars—and it is as much to the bishop of Rome's shame to deny what their precedent bishops owned; therefore, his highness claims but what he can justify the bishop Eleutherius gave to Lucius, the first Christian king of the Britons; so that I shall, without scruple, vote his highness, king Henry, my supreme over ecclesiastick matters as well as temporal, and head thereof even of both isles, England and Ireland, and that without guilt of conscience or sin to God: and he who will not pass this act, as I do, is no true subject to his highness."

This flimsy reasoning, or we should rather say confusion of ideas, by which he seeks to identify that temporal authority of the civil ruler, which was ever sanctioned by the Redeemer and the Church, with the spiritual power entrusted by Christ, only to the anointed pastors of his sacred fold, did not produce its desired effect.

There were in parliament two spiritual proctors from every diocese: it was their special province, "upon such things of learning as should happen in controversy," to declare what was the doctrine agreeable to truth and to the teaching of the Church; and from time immemorial they enjoyed the right that nothing contrary to their decision should be enacted in parliament. From this body now proceeded the chief opposition to the act of supremacy. Looked up to by the nation as the natural guardians for preserving untainted the purity of faith, they, without a dissentient voice, rejected with disdain the measures now proposed by the lord deputy. Moreover, they could not be overcome by threats or by corruption, and hence it became an object of anxious care to the court to have these proctors excluded, without delay, from parliament. On the 18th of May, 1537, lords Gray and Brabazon thus wrote to lord Cromwell in England:—

"Considering both the obstinacy of the spirituality used in this session, and having remembered if the king's highness would send any commissioners hither, we thought it good to have the parliament open at his coming, to the intent, that the wilfulness of the spirituality being refrained, things for the king's honour and profit, and the common weal of this land, now by them denied to be granted, may then pass accordingly. The frowardness and obstinacy of the proctors of the clergy from the beginning of this parliament, and at this session, both of them the bishops and abbots, hath been such, that we think we can no less do than advertise your lordship thereof. . . Con-

sidering their obstinacy, we thought good to prorogue the parliament for this time, and against the next sessions provide a remedy for them. And, therefore, my lord, it were well done that some means be devised whereby they may be brought to remember their duties better. Except the means may be found that these proctors may be put from voice in the parliament, there shall but few things pass for the king's profit; for, hitherto, have they showed themselves in nothing conformable."^{*}

In accordance with these wishes, an order was at once transmitted to the commissioners, under the great seal of England, declaring that the spiritual proctors should be allowed no vote in parliament; and that their assent should nowise be requisite for any act of the legislature.[†]

The voice of the spiritual pastors being thus hushed, and many of the Irish chieftains having retired in disgust from the parliament, the act of supremacy was passed. It was boasted by Henry's agents on the continent, that the Irish nation had renounced the spiritual supremacy of Rome; but whatever may be deemed the civil result of the above act, surely no impartial observer will affirm that such an enactment of *an English parliament in Ireland, carried by despotism*, can be in any way referred to the representatives of the Irish nation.

3.—Other Acts of Parliament.

It is a remarkable coincidence that the same parliament that thus sought to introduce the new reformed principles into Ireland, was also the first to enact that the king of England should in future be styled *king* instead of *lord* of Ireland.[‡] This act was especially pleasing to Henry, and was accompanied by public demonstrations of joy in the Irish capital. A solemn "Te Deum" was chanted in St. Patrick's Cathedral; bonfires were made in the public squares; wine, too, was set in the streets, and banquets were offered to the citizens by the court officials: so important a triumph was this deemed in promoting the cause of their royal master.

Other acts regarding the spiritual administration were passed in quick succession. The king being now head of the Church,

^{*} State Papers, Henry VIII. vol. ii. p. 437.

[†] Irish Statute 28th Henry VIII. chap. xii.

[‡] Ir. Stat. 33rd Henry VIII. ch. i.

it was deemed necessary to secure to him a tribute from the ecclesiastical property. Hence an act for *first fruits* declared that "all persons nominated to any ecclesiastical preferment, should pay to the king the profits for one year."* Another act vested in him the first fruits of abbeys, priories, and hospitals; whilst another enacted that the twentieth part of the profit of all spiritual benefices should be paid to the king for ever.

Even all this was not deemed enough to secure the *spiritual supremacy* of Henry; and hence another act prohibited the payment of Peter's Pence to the See of Rome, as well as the procuring of dispensations and faculties from the same ecclesiastical source; whilst these faculties were in future to be granted only by commissioners chosen by the king, who, in the wisdom of the reformed court, should be the new spiritual guides of the Irish people, instead of the successors of St. Peter.

It was so transparent that these enactments were repugnant to the traditions and hereditary glory of the Irish nation, that the parliament soon deemed it better to lay aside the mask, and wage an open war against our national usages, and even against our existence as a people. Thus we find one act passed for encouraging "the English order, habit, and language," whilst it prescribed that spiritual preferment should be given "only to such as could speak English, unless after four proclamations in the next market-town such could not be had." Should any Irishman, perchance, be thus promoted to any benefice, there was an oath imposed, "that he would endeavour to learn and teach the English tongue to all and every being under his rule, and to bid the beads in the English tongue, and preach the word of God in English, if he can preach; and to keep, or cause to be kept, within his parish, a school to learn English, if any children of his parish come to him to learn the same, taking for the keeping of the same school such convenient stipend or salary as in the same land is accustomed to be taken."† At the same time a scheme was laid as diabolical as was ever planned by the perverted ingenuity of man, for the utter extirpation of the Irish. We transcribe it from the volume of state papers already referred to:—

* Irish Stat. 28th Henry VIII. ch. viii.

† Irish Stat. Henry VIII. ch. xv.

“The very living of the Irishry doth clearly consist in two things, and take away the same from them, and they are past for ever to recover or yet to annoy any subject in Ireland. Take first from them their corn and as much as cannot be husbanded and had into the hands of such as shall dwell and inhabit in their lands, to burn and destroy the same, so as the Irishry shall not live thereupon; and then to have their cattle and beasts, which shall be hardest to come by; and yet with guides and policy they be oft had and taken. And by reason that the several armies, as I devised in my other paper, should proceed at once, it is not possible for the said Irishry to put or flee their cattle from one country into another, but that one of the armies shall come thereby; and admitting the impossibility so that their cattle were saved, yet in the continuance of one year, the same cattle shall be dead, destroyed, stolen, strayed or eaten, by reason of the continual removing of them, going from one wood to another, their lying out all the winter, their narrow pastures. . . . And then they (the Irishry) shall be without corn, victuals or cattle, and thereof shall ensue the putting in effect all these wars against them.”

4.—*Zealous Efforts of the Protestant Archbishop.—Destruction of Relics and Church Ornaments.*

We have already seen how the English monarch, by his letter of the 7th July, 1537, sought to stimulate the zeal of the archbishop of Dublin, reminding him of the mission he had received from the crown, and recalling also to his memory how he who had made him bishop of that see, could, with the same facility, *unmake him*.

In his reply, Dr. Browne sketches his past zealous labours, and declares his earnest desire to correspond faithfully with the wishes of Henry:—

“May it please your most excellent highness to be advertised, that on the 11th day of September I received your most gracious letters, which, being perused, did not only cause me to take fruitful and gracious monitions, but also made me to tremble in body for fear of incurring your majesty's displeasure. And where your majesty writeth unto me, I have not endeavoured myself in setting forth and preaching the sincere word of God, avoiding all superstition used against the honour of the same, I may signify unto your highness of verity, that for my small abode here, there hath not these many years any my predecessors so much exercised in declaring to the people the only Gospel of Christ, persuading and inducing the hearers unto the true meaning of the same, utterly despising the usurped power of the bishop of Rome, *being a thing not a little rooted among the inhabitants here*. Touching the second article in your grace's

letters concerning your majesty's affairs here, I refer me to judgment for the most part of your highness's council here, how in that behalf I have used myself, being the first spiritual man that moved the twentieth parts and first fruits, setting forth in what in me lay the like first fruits of all monasteries being before not motioned. . . . Finally, certifying your majesty that I received your grace's other letters, at this season to me addressed, on behalf of Edward Vaughan, the queen's gracious servant, the contents whereof I have fully accomplished. Beseeching your highness of your most accustomed goodness to accept this my rude letter, answerable even as I were personally doing my duty, approaching on knees before your majesty, declaring the certainty of all the premises, with acknowledging my ignorances, desiring of God, that hour or minute I should prefix myself to declare the Gospel of Christ, after any other sort than of my part most unworthy have heretofore done, before your majesty, in rebuking the papistical power, or in any other point concerning the advancement of your grace's affairs, should not be prompt to set forth benignly, that the ground should open and swallow me."—(27th Sept. 1537, State Pap. Henry VIII. vol. ii. pag. 512.)

But it was by his deeds still more than by his words that Dr. Browne resolved to prove his devotion to the new doctrines; and hence with barbaric fury he set to work at once to demolish the statues which adorned the interior of the cathedral church of St. Patrick, and to deface and destroy the valuable paintings and other rich ornaments of Christ's Church.* It was in a like manner that the religious feelings of the natives were outraged in other parts of the island. Thus, at Ballybogan, in the diocese of Meath, a famous image of our Saviour on the cross, which for centuries had been held in great veneration, was publicly destroyed by fire. In Trim, there was a shrine of the Blessed Virgin, to which the faithful resorted even from the remotest parts of the island: its venerable statue representing the "Mother of God," was now consigned to the flames, whilst the votive offerings and rich ornaments which adorned it, were plundered by the mis-named reformers.

It will not suffice to plead in palliation that these were acts of individual barbarity, for which the government cannot be held responsible: they were all done by the public ministers of the English monarch; and to complete the work which was thus so well begun, letters patent under the privy seal were issued in 1539, nominating a commission, one of whose members

* Cox, i. 256; Mason's "St. Patrick's"; Mant. i. 125.

was "George Browne, archbishop of Dublin," and which, in a particular manner, was destined "to investigate, inquire, and search out where, within the said land of Ireland, there were any notable images or relics, at which the simple people of the said lord the king were wont to meet together; and that they should break in pieces, deform, and bear away the same, and thus with all things pertaining, annexed, and adjoined thereto, they should utterly abolish them," so that nothing of that sort "might thenceforth for ever be in use in the said land or dominion of the aforesaid lord the king."*

Thus was a loose rein given to all such as might think fit to plunder and pillage the monuments of the religion and piety of our fathers. We shall mention only a few instances of their sacrilegious Vandalism, which were especially execrated by our Catholic people. In an excursion into the North, the lord deputy converted the famous cathedral church of Down into a stable, then destroyed it by fire, and defaced the monuments of the patron saints of Erin, and it is supposed scattered their relics. The same lord deputy rifled the abbey of Ballyclare, and left neither chalice, cross, nor bell in it,† and on another occasion seized and confiscated all the rich ornaments of the cathedral of Galway.‡ But what most of all excited the indignation of the island, was the destruction of the crozier of St. Patrick, known in our annals as "the staff of Jesus."§ In 1180, soon after the first invasion by the English, it was carried away from Armagh, and for three hundred and fifty years had been preserved with religious care in the cathedral of Dublin. Now, however, at the hands of the ruthless Vandals who assumed the name of reformers, it shared the same fate as the other monuments of our nation and religion, and was publicly consigned to the flames.

* "Public Records of Ireland," 1810-1815, Pl. vi. No. 3; Mant, i. 160.

† Cox, i. 265.

‡ Hardiman's Galway, p. 239.

§ Our apostle brought this crozier with him from Rome, and seems to have inserted in it a portion of some wood hallowed by the touch of our blessed Saviour during his mortal life: hence the Four Masters (ad. an. 1537) say that "it was in the hand of Christ while he was among men." It was ever held in the highest veneration in Ireland: and the holy disciple of St. Patrick, St. Thassach, is commemorated as the first who adorned it with a precious covering: "fuit primus qui baculum Jesu pretioso tegumento obcelavit."—See "Obit. and Martyrol. of Christ Church," published by Royal Irish Acad. 1844, pref. xiii. seqq.

This wholesale destruction of sacred images and relics would now-a-days seem incredible, were it not minutely detailed by our chief annalists.

Sir James Ware briefly states:—"About this time, amongst the famous images whereunto pilgrimages were made, the statue of the Blessed Virgin was burned,† then kept at Trim, in the abbey of the canons regular, and the gifts of the pilgrims were taken away from thence. The image of *Christ crucified*, in the abbey of Ballybogan, and *St. Patrick's staff*, in the cathedral church of the Holy Trinity, at Dublin, which William, the son of Aldeline, brought from Ardmagh, and gave it as a gift to that church, in the year 1180, underwent the like fate."

There is in Trinity College, Dublin, another very ancient manuscript volume of annals, which gives the following more detailed narrative:—‡

"The most miraculous image of Mary, which was at Baile-athatrium, and which the Irish people had all honoured for a long time, and at which were healed the blind, the deaf, the lame, and every sort of disease, was burned by the Sassenachs. And the staff of Jesus, which was in Dublin, and which wrought many wonders and miracles in Ireland since the time of St. Patrick down to that period, and which was in the hand of Christ himself, was burned by the Sassenachs in like manner. And not only that, but there was not a holy

* Annals of Henry VIII. page 99.

† The destruction of the sacred image was soon followed by the suppression of the monastery. On the 15th May, 1539, the royal commissioners arrived. The ornaments of gold and silver, the crucifixes, chalices, and other altar-plate, were seized on for royal use; the property in the monastery, valued at £1,861 15s. 2d., remunerated the plunderers, and the lands attached to the abbey were distributed among the Reforming favorites.—Mant, loc. cit. pag. 162, and Calendar of Pat. Rolls, vol. i. pag. 64, seqq. §.

It was at the same time that the abbey of Navan was plundered: "the image of the Blessed Virgin, so long held in veneration here, was torn from her altar and indignantly destroyed. The gold and silver ornaments of the church,—chalices, ciboriums, crucifixes, images, vestments, altar-plate and altar-linen,—all were carried off to fill the coffers of Henry VIII., and to enrich the worshippers of lay supremacy."—Cogan, "The Diocese of Meath," vol. i. pag. 225. This sanctuary of Navan was a long-cherished place of pilgrimage from every part of Ireland. The parliament held in Dublin in 1454, ordered letters patent to be issued, granting protection to all, *whether rebels or others*, who might be engaged in this pilgrimage. In the preamble to another act of parliament, in 1460, a striking miracle is mentioned as having then occurred before that shrine, whereby a Mr. Stackbolle, whose tongue had been cut off, and his eyes put out, being brought before the image of the Blessed Virgin "was, by her grace, mediation, and miraculous power, restored to his sight and speech."—See Hardiman, "Stat. of Kilkenny," pag. 25 and 51, published by I. A. S. in 1842.

‡ See "The Book of Obits and Martyrology of the Cathedral Church of the Holy Trinity," printed by Royal Irish Acad. 1844. Intr. pag. xvi.

cross, nor an image of Mary, nor other celebrated image in Ireland, over which their power had reached, that they did not burn. Nor was there one of the seven (religious) orders which came under their power that they did not ruin."

The Four Masters (ad. an. 1537) give, however, the most complete account of the Vandalism which desolated our country through the impious rage of the English monarch:—

"A heresy and a new error," they write, "broke out in England, the effects of pride, vain-glory, avarice, sensual desire, and the prevalence of a variety of scientific and philosophical speculations, so that the people of England went into opposition to the Pope and to Rome. At the same time they followed a variety of opinions, and adopting the old law of Moses after the manner of the Jewish people, they gave the title of head of the church of God, during his reign, to the king. There were enacted by the king and council new laws and statutes after their own will. They ruined the orders who were permitted to hold worldly possessions, viz., monks, canons regular, nuns, and brethren of the cross; and also the four mendicant orders, the Franciscans, the Preachers, the Carmelites, and the Augustinians. The possessions and livings of all these were taken up for the king. They broke into the monasteries; they sold their roofs and bells, so that there was not a monastery from Arann of the Saints to the Iccian sea, that was not broken and scattered, except only a few in Ireland, which escaped the notice and attention of the English. They further burned and broke the famous images, shrines, and relics of Ireland and England. After that they burned, in like manner, the celebrated image of Mary, which was at Ath-Truim, which used to perform wonders and miracles, and at which were healed the blind, the deaf, the lame, and the sufferers from all diseases, and the staff of Jesus, which was in Dublin, performing miracles from the days of St. Patrick down to that time, and which was in the hand of Christ whilst he was among men. They also made archbishops and bishops for themselves; and, although great was the persecution of the Roman emperors against the church, it is not probable that so great a persecution as this ever came upon the world; so that it is impossible to tell or narrate its description, unless it should be told by him who saw it."

From these last words we may gather how general was the storm let loose against the religious orders in Ireland. In the districts subject to the English sway, few escaped its fury, and the persecution continued unabated till the accession of queen Mary. Even in the last year of king Edward's reign, we find it mournfully commemorated by the same annalists, that "the churches of Clonmacnoise were plundered, and there was not left a bell, small or large, an image, an altar, a book, a gem, or

even glass in the window, which was not carried off;" and they add, "lamentable was this deed, the plundering of the city of Kieran."

5.—*The Destruction of Monasteries.*

SOME modern writers have hazarded the assertion, that at the period of Henry VIII.'s reformation, no blood was shed in Ireland for the denial of the royal supremacy. Such a theory, however, was unknown to our ancient annalists; and in the passage just now cited, from the *Four Masters*, it is declared that the fury of the pagan persecutors against the Christians was surpassed by the rapacity and cruelty of Henry's agents: so much so, that none could credit their excesses save those who were eye-witnesses of them. Under the year 1540, the same annalists mention one particular instance, as it regarded their own order: The guardian, they say, and some of the friars of the Franciscan convent of Monaghan, were put to death in that year, for having refused to acknowledge the spiritual supremacy of the king; and they add the simple, but momentous record, that "the English, throughout every part of Ireland where their power extended, were persecuting and banishing the religious orders."

The convents of the mendicant orders, however, were not those that were most exposed to the rage of the reforming monarch; the wealthy abbeys and monasteries chiefly attracted his attention, and felt the full violence of his rapacity. We shall defer, however, to the next article the consideration of the special sufferings to which some of these communities were subjected, that we may proceed with greater order in detailing the deeds of plunder of these so-called reformers.

It was in 1536 that the first grant of religious houses was made to the king by the authority of the Irish parliament. This grant comprised three hundred and seventy monasteries, whose yearly value amounted to £32,000; whilst their moveables were at the same time rated at £100,000.* In the following year, by virtue of a commission under the great seal of England, eight abbeys were suppressed; and in 1538, a further order was issued, for the suppression of *all the monasteries and abbeys*. In many instances, indeed, it was impossible to carry this decree into

* Loftus's MS. Marsh's Library, ap. Mant, loc. cit. i. 155.

immediate execution; however, we find that before the close of 1539, no fewer than twenty-four monasteries of the highest class, whose abbots and priors were entitled to a seat and suffrage in parliament amongst the spiritual peers, were successfully suppressed by the government.* In some cases, the superiors of these religious houses surrendered without opposition the charge entrusted unto them: but whenever they could not be induced by threats or promises to resign their monasteries to the crown, severer measures were resorted to; and one instance is especially recorded, of Manus O'Fihily, the last abbot of St. Mary's, Thurles, who, on refusal to comply with the wishes of the crown, was carried a prisoner to Dublin, and subjected to a long and painful imprisonment.†

King Edward VI., in his proclamation of 6th of February, 1551, declares, that "his gracious father, king Henry of happy memory, dissolved all priories, monasteries,‡ abbeys, and other pretended religious houses in Ireland, as being but nurseries for vice and luxury, more than for sacred learning," and because their inmates persisted in keeping "the light of the Gospel from his people." Were the refusal to embrace the newly-invented tenets assigned as the motive for the suppression of these monasteries, we would not be disposed to quarrel with the royal reasoning; but it is too ungenerous, after seizing on their property and possessions, to endeavour to malign the character of these sanctuaries of virtue and learning. The letter of the lord deputy and council of Ireland, on receipt of the order for the suppression of these monasteries, presents a far surer ground for judging of the true character of these institutions. It is dated 21st May, 1539:—§

* Cox's History, etc. i. 260; Archdall's Monasticon, page 169.

† Grose's Irish Antiquities, ii. 85.

‡ Marsham, though a Protestant, thus writes in his preface to Steven's Addit. to Monasticon Anglic.: "Our monasteries have long since perished; nor have we any footsteps left of the piety of our ancestors, besides the battered walls and deplorable ruins. We see, alas!—we see the most august churches and stupendous monuments, dedicated to the eternal God, than which nothing can be now more defaced, under the specious pretence of superstition,—most filthily defiled, and expecting utter destruction. Horses are stabled at the altar of Christ, and the relics of martyrs are dug up." Another Protestant (Mr. Denham) is not less severe in his strictures on English vandalism:

"Who sees those dismal heaps, but will demand,
What barb'rous invader sacked the land?

But when he hears no Goth, no Turk did bring

This desolation, but a Christian king," etc.—(*Cowper's Hill*.)

§ State Papers, iii. page 130.

" May it please your honorable lordship to be advertised, that by the report of Thomas Cusack and other, repaired lately out of the realm of England into this land, it hath been openly bruited the king's grace's pleasure to be, that all the monasteries within this land should be suppressed, none to stand. Amongst which, for the common weal of this said land, if it might stand with the king's most gracious pleasure by your good lordship's advertisement, in our opinions it were right expedient that six houses should stand and continue, changing their clothing and rule into such sort and order as the king's grace shall will them: which are named St. Mary's Abbey, adjoining to Dublin, a house of white monks; Christ's Church, a house of canons, situated in the middle of the city of Dublin; the nunnery of Grace-Dieu, in the county of Dublin; Connall, in the county of Kildare; Kenleys and Jerpoint, in the county of Kilkenny. *For in these houses commonly, and in others such like,* in default of common inns, which are not in this island, the king's deputy and all other his grace's council and officers, also Irishmen and others resorting to the king's deputy in their quarters, is and hath been most commonly lodged at the cost of the said houses. Also in them young men and children, both gentlemen's children and others, both of man kind and woman kind, be brought up in virtue, learning, and in the English tongue and behaviour, to the great charge of the said houses; that is to say, the women kind of the whole Englishrie of this land for the most part, in the said nunnery, and the man kind in the other said houses. And in the said house of St. Mary's Abbey hath been the common resort of all such of reputation as hath repaired hither out of England. And in Christ's Church, parliaments, councils, and the common resorte in term-time for definitions of all matters by judges and learned men is, for the most part, used. Also at every hosting, rode and journey, the said houses, at their proper costs, findeth as many men of war as they are appointed by the king's deputy. And if they were suppressed, the profit of them should scarcely find so many men of war, according to the rate of the king's wages, as they now standing do find and hath found, over and besides the yearly payment both of subsidy, also the twentieth part of their small revenue, with also their first fruits, at every change of their head rulers. . . . Notwithstanding, the lord chancellor, the archbishop of Dublin, and Mr. Brabazon, under-treasurer, for that they were named to be commissioners for the suppression, did forbear with us to subscribe this letter, although they thought and agreed as is aforesaid. Wherefore, in discharge of our duties to the king's majesty, we declare here this our opinion in the premises to your honorable lordship, etc.

" Written at Dublin, the 21st day of May, 1539.

" Your lordship's most bounden,

LEONARD GRAY,
JAMES BUTLER,
GERALD AYLMER, *justice.*

THOMAS LUTTRELL, *justice.*
THOMAS HOWTH, *justice.*"

This letter fully corroborates the plea put forward by the abbot of St. Mary's, when petitioning to be exempt from the order for suppression: "Verily, we be but stewards and purveyors to other men's uses for the king's honour, keeping hospitality, and many poor men, scholars, and orphans."*

The true motive which stimulated the monarch to the suppression of these institutions, besides the hatred for their inmates, whom he regarded as the chief opponents to his iniquitous designs, was his own rapacity, and the desire to appropriate the treasures with which the piety of the faithful had enriched these institutions. Even Dr. Mant does not deny that this was the mainspring of the royal movements.† Some of the chief co-operators seem to have been stimulated by a like impulse. Thus we find the lord chancellor Allen endeavouring to secure for himself the monastery of Thomas-court, near Dublin,‡ though he failed in his suit, and that venerable abbey became a prey to Sir Thomas Brabazon, the then vice-treasurer. Even archbishop Browne sought to obtain for himself and family a share of the religious plunder. On the first rumour of the commission, he wrote to lord Cromwell, soliciting "a very poor house of friars," as he describes it, "named the New Abbey, which lay very commodious for him by Ballymore."§ This monastery, however, had already been given away, and what especially provoked the displeasure of the archbishop, *had been bestowed upon an Irishman*.|| He next solicited a grant of the nunnery of Grace-Dieu; but here too his suit was fruitless; though Dr. Browne was the leading agent of the government in confiscating these religious houses, yet there were others more active to seize upon them as their prey.

By a special order of the king,¶ all the gold and silver plate,

* Cambren. Evers., ii. 545, note.

† Hist. of Ir., ch. i. 183.

‡ State Pap. He assigned as his chief reason, "that he had no house in Dublin," and that thereby he "would be better able to serve the king."

§ State Papers, No. ccxxvi.

|| State Papers. "I am clene despatched of any pleasures there, and the profite thereof gyven to an Irishman, so that I am compted an unworthie parson."

¶ Act 28th Henry VIII., chap 16. In Shirley's "Original Letters," p. 31, we find the following order from the lord protector Somerset (1549, 6th January) to the dean of St. Patrick's, "for the better furniture of the mint, being advertised that one thousand ounces of plate of crosses, and such like things, remaineth in the hands of you, the dean of St. Patrick's, we have thought

with the jewels and principal ornaments, also the lead and bells, were reserved for the crown; the lands and other property were put up for sale, or privately bestowed on the minions of the monarch. Amongst the records of this spoliation, there is one of £326 2s. 11d. "for the price of divers pieces of gold and silver, and also of certain precious stones set in gold and silver, and of silver ornaments and other things upon divers images, pictures, and reliques in the late monasteries, priories, cathedral and parish churches, and other places within the said land of Ireland lately destroyed, broken," etc. Another item of the sale presents £20, "being the price of 1,000 lbs. weight of wax, manufactured into candles, tapers, images, and pictures." From thirty-nine monasteries, arose a sum of £1710 2s., "the price of divers vases, jewels, and ornaments of gold and silver, and bells, and the utensils, and household stuff." The property in the monastery of Melifont was sold for £141; that of the monastery of Kells, for £191; of the abbey of the Blessed Virgin, at Trim, for £186; of the monastery of St. Mary's, near Dublin, for £385. The house of the Carmelites in Kildare brought only £1; whilst that of the Dominicans in Kilkenny was disposed of for £57. We find an item of £3 7s. 6d. "for the price of divers silver or holy crosses, in the late abbeys of Kilcooly and Innislannagh." An account is also given of sundry bells, belonging to the different monasteries, and of one in particular it is said: "Nor do we render any price for a bell, appertaining to the late house of brothers at Clane, inasmuch as said bell came into the lands of lord Leonard Gray, so that no produce in respect thereof came to our hands, as we say upon our oaths."*

This suppression, however, of religious houses was far from being universal, as it embraced only such districts as were subject to, or under the influence of the crown of England; and sir John Davies, writing during the reign of James I., remarks in particular as to "the abbeys and convents in Tyrone, Tyr-

good to require you to deliver the same to the hands of Agard, the king's majesty's officer of the mint there, indenting with him for the receipt of the same, to be employed to his majesty's use as by him shall be thought most for his highness' commodity; and for the safe keeping of it hitherto by you the dean, his majesty, of his liberality, by our advices, is pleased to allow to you the sum of £20 in ready money."

* Extract from Roll in Record-Office, Dublin, ap. Mant, vol. i. p. 161. seq.

connell, and Fermanagh," that though "they were dissolved in the 33rd of king Henry VIII., yet they were never surveyed, nor reduced into charge, but were continually possessed by the religious persons until his present majesty that now is came to the crown."

The destruction of the monasteries was followed by the suppression of the collegiate church of St. Patrick, in Dublin. For some years a plan had been laid by the archbishop to secure this boon for his majesty, and Cromwell had received £60 for lending his aid to the intrigue.* The instructions sent from London, on the 25th May, 1547, ordering the suppression of the collegiate church, and the transmission of its plate and ornaments to the English mint, have been printed by Shirley; and we copy here the preamble of these instructions, as it serves to illustrate the undying devotion of the Irish people to their glorious apostle: "Touching St. Patrick," it says, "it appeareth that the people of that realm have a great confidence in the said St. Patrick, taking him for their chief patron under Christ: the king's majesty's pleasure, with the advice of me, the lord protector, and the rest of his majesty's privy council, is, that as well for that superstitious opinion of the common people as for sundry other considerations you shall accordingly," etc.—(Orig. Lett. p. 1.)

6.—*Some particular Instances of the Sufferings of the Religious Orders.*

THE celebrated annalist of the Trinitarian Order, Father Domingo Lopez, will be be our guide in this article. His history of the order in Ireland† was compiled from the original letters transmitted, at the period of which we speak, to the superiors of the central house of the order in Spain; and hence his narrative presents all the vividness and interest of a contemporary record. In the first pages he informs us, that the emissaries of Antiochus of old did not rage with greater fury against

* See Moore's "History of Ireland," vol. iii. p. 297.

† The title of this very rare work is "Noticias Historicas de las tres florentissimas Provincias del celeste orden de la ssma. Trinidad," etc. by Fr. Domingo Lopez, 1 vol. 4to, Madrid, 1714. His fourth part, entitled "History of the Martyrs in Ireland during the reign of Henry VIII." runs through about 100 pages.

the Jews, than did the agents of Henry in Ireland against Irish Catholics; plundering the churches and monasteries, despoiling the sacred shrines and exterminating the religious orders. Not only in England but even in France, and Germany, and Switzerland, schismatical agents were sought out—adepts in the arts of plunder and confiscation; in every town the prisons were filled with the most worthy Catholics; the name of homicide or robber was less odious to the government than that of papist; and to insult the clergy, and outrage the sacred ceremonies of religion, was the surest means to merit the favour of the court.

Many of the religious houses were totally destroyed, and their inmates put to death in a thousand different ways. In some monasteries, however, the religious were allowed to continue; but being deprived of all they possessed, hunger and thirst was to them a lengthened martyrdom: such was the vigilance of their persecutors, that oftentimes they could not procure even bread and water for their sustenance. The nuns, too, were exposed to manifold sufferings, which they endured with unexampled heroism; without raiment and without food, the only prayer they breathed was for perseverance, and faith, and courage to sustain them in the martyrdom that awaited them.

The relics and bodies of saints which were religiously preserved in the Catholic churches and sanctuaries were scattered and destroyed; the sacred vestments were profaned; the statues were mutilated, and those of wood were hewn in pieces and cast into the flames; the paintings were torn in shreds and thrown upon the streets; in a word, every outrage that malice or ingenuity could devise, was heaped upon our holy religion by these agents of the English schism.

Atharee.—The convent of Atharee, which was reckoned the oldest foundation of the Trinitarian Order in Ireland, received the summons in 1539 to take the oath of supremacy and surrender its property to the crown. Father Robert, a man of learning and virtue, was the superior of the convent, and having received intelligence of the storm which was gathering against his order, he assembled the forty-two religious who formed the community of Atharee, and announcing to them the impious designs of Henry, declared that the king was now an avowed heretic, and only sought to make them his associates in the guilt

of schism. All the community shared the sentiments of the worthy superior, and avowed their readiness to lay down their lives, and to sacrifice all that they possessed, sooner than deny their faith or renounce their spiritual allegiance to the Holy See. Nor was this a mere-empty boast—a set form of idle words. The religious set to work at once to distribute amongst the poor all the provisions and clothing that were in the convent, and all the sacred vessels and ornaments for the altar were concealed in various places, so that when at length the agents of the government arrived, they could not find even a wooden crucifix on which to vent their impious rage. Three times summoned before the magistrate, Father Robert was immovable in rejecting the proffered honours of the court, and in declaring his devoted attachment to the Catholic faith. ‘None,’ he said, ‘had ever sought to propagate their religious tenets by the sword except the pagan emperors in the early ages, and Mahomet in later times. As for himself and community they were resolved that no violence should move them from the principles of truth: they recognized no head of the Catholic Church save the Vicar of Jesus Christ; and as for the king of England, they regarded him not even as a member of that holy Church, but as head of the synagogue of Satan.’ At these words of the venerable father, an heretical officer drew his sword, and with one blow severed his head from his body. The other agents of the court were at once let loose against the unoffending community. As the public prison was full of other victims, the religious were dragged to confinement in private houses: there many died of the injuries and maltreatment which they received; some too, were secretly murdered, whilst others were publicly hanged in the market-place. It was on the 12th and 13th of February, 1539, that these happy fathers thus attained their eternal crown.

Dublin.—The Trinitarian convent in Dublin was the chief house of the order in Ireland; the building was large and ornamental, and the community numbered no fewer than fifty religious. On the first intelligence of the king’s iniquitous designs, a meeting of the superiors of the various houses of the order was convened in Dublin. Father Patrick Humbert was then provincial, and presided on the occasion; the ex-provincial, Father

Theobald, also assisted; and besides the local superiors, several other members remarkable for their learning and sanctity were also present, and amongst them we find the names of Father Thaddeus O'Brien, from Kilkenny; F. John Hogan and F. William Hurley. In fact, as an eye-witness, who compiled a narrative of the subsequent events, records, this assembly might well be said to represent the whole Irish Church, such was the learning, and authority, and sanctity of those who composed it.

The chapter being assembled, all gave their opinion on the momentous subject for which they were convened, and all declared themselves ready to lay down their lives, in defence of their holy religion and of the authority of the Holy See, whilst they stigmatized as heretical and impious the innovations of the English king. During their conference the news was received of the fate of their brethren of Atharee; they all at once returned thanks to God, and father Theobald exclaimed in holy joy: "The most Holy Trinity has blessed our order with this happy commencement, and thus given us a pledge that its blessing will accompany us even to the end." Before separating all signed the profession of Catholic faith, and addressed an exhortation to the faithful, not to allow themselves to be led astray by deceitful reasonings and seduced into the abyss of schism.

It was on Saturday, the 24th of February, that the royal agents arrived in Dublin to enforce the oath of supremacy and expel the religious from their possessions. The following morning saw the exhortation of the Trinitarian fathers posted in all the public squares and other places of resort. The provincial and father Theobald, moreover, went about fearlessly addressing the people and combating the schismatical decrees, till the former fell transpierced by a musket ball, whilst a hired band seized upon the latter and dragged him through the streets. The good father expressed his joy in being found worthy to thus suffer for the Catholic faith, and he repeated his exhortations, till at length a stroke from a hatchet terminated his existence. Even his body was treated with all possible insult by the heretical agents; but the Catholics, during the night, gathered together his scattered members and secretly interred them. The other religious were the next day obliged

to seek their safety by flight, and wheresoever discovered, they were treated with the like cruelty and ferocity.

Limerick.—The Trinitarian convent of Limerick was dedicated under the invocation of the Holy Cross, and numbered forty-five religious amongst its inmates. Cornelius O'Neil, a member of the order, who, in preceding years, had acted as provincial, and discharged many other important offices, was at this time suffragan or coadjutor to the aged and feeble bishop of Limerick.* He belonged to the princely family of Tyrone, and was remarkable for his zeal and abstinence and charity: all that he had from his family possessions he made the patrimony of the poor; for he regarded the riches of faith as his own true inheritance. Seeing the tendency of the counsels of the king, he convoked the religious of his community and said to them: "The beginnings which we witness cannot lead to a happy end: the king and kingdom of England have abandoned the Church, and we are in danger of heresy being introduced amongst us, unless God, by his omnipotent arm, protect us." He then counselled them to prepare for all extremities, and to dispose of everything appertaining to the monastery, especially of the gold and silver vases of the sanctuary, lest they should be profaned by the heretical enemies of our holy religion. In like manner the good bishop warned the other religious orders and the secular clergy of the impending dangers. When he received intelligence of the destruction of the other convents, and of the sufferings of the religious, he, in union with the members of his order, solemnly intoned the "Te Deum," and fervently prayed that the most Holy Trinity would grant to them the heroic fortitude of their martyred brethren.

On the morning of St. John's feast, 24th June, 1539, the holy bishop preached in his cathedral to an overflowing congregation: indeed the whole city had assembled to hear the word of life from the lips of their saintly pastor. He took that opportunity to denounce the threatened innovations: "The royal commands (he said) are based on heresy: the king and his counsellors, and those who follow him in his perverse designs, are anathematized and cut off from the tree of life;" and he added

* For Dr. Coyn, bishop of Limerick, see Ware's Bishops, pag. 510; and Shirley, "Original Letters," pag. 47.

that he himself now anathematized anew and excommunicated any of his flock who should thus renounce the saving doctrines of the Catholic faith. The emissaries of the crown, who feared to insult the loved bishop in the presence of his flock, sought him in the evening of that day at his private residence, ordering him to comply with the king's decree, otherwise threatening him with instant death. The venerable prelate, throwing himself upon his knees, and with eyes uplifted to heaven, exclaimed: "Oh, Lord! on this morning I offered to thee on the altar the unbloody sacrifice of the Body of my Saviour: grant that I may now offer to thy greater honour and glory the sacrifice of my own life;" and then turning towards a painting of the Holy Trinity which was suspended in his room, he scarce had time to pronounce the ejaculation "*Sancta Trinitas, unus Deus, miserere nobis,*" when, by a blow of a sword, his head was severed from his body.* The monastery was then pillaged, and the monks heroically shared the fate of their chief pastor. Thus were new members added to the heavenly choir of martyrs on 24th and 25th of June, 1539.

The other convents of the order in Cork, Kilkenny, Kildare, Ross, Dundalk, Galway, Cashel, etc.† showed the same fortitude: all were plundered of whatever riches they possessed; and there was not one of them but was adorned with the palm of martyrdom. So universal, indeed, was the ruin that fell upon this religious order, that all vestiges of it disappear from the subsequent history of our Church.

We shall conclude this sketch of the sufferings of these religious, with an extract from a letter written by a Dominican father in 1547: after commemorating the heroic death of some Trinitarian fathers in Mullingar, he adds: "Never in the time of Nero, or Diocletian, or the other enemies of the Christian name, was a more fiery persecution witnessed than now raged against our Church; its agents seem to have laid aside all humanity, and to have transformed themselves into beasts, or rather into demons."‡

* There was another martyr of the same family, Arthur O'Neil, also a member of the Trinitarian Order; he preached the faith in Chaldea and Asia Minor, and was martyred there in 1282.

† See a very imperfect list of the houses of the Trinitarian Order in DeBurgo: Hib. Dominic. page 739.

‡ Ap. Lopez, page 186.

Many of the monasteries referred to were well provided with books and manuscripts, but all were pillaged and destroyed; oftentimes even the material edifice was not spared: and Henry was fond of employing the proverbial phrase, "If the nests remain, the birds will soon be back to dwell in them."*

7.—*Further Efforts of the Government to promote the New Reformation.*

On the 12th of December, 1538, the Irish council, in reply to a letter of the lord privy seal, declares, that "touching your lordship's advertisement for the setting forth of the word of God, abolishing of the bishop of Rome's authority, etc., we have well begun therein already, and to our power shall persevere with all industry and diligence."

In pursuance of this promise, the archbishop of Dublin, with the lord chancellor and some other members of the council, set out soon after on a military-religious visitation of four counties, viz.—Carlow, Wexford, Waterford, and Tipperary. A narrative of their progress was transmitted to England on 18th January, 1539, from which it will suffice to select a few extracts:†

"We resorted first to Carlow, where the lord James Butler kept his Christmas; and there *being very well entertained*, from thence we went to Kilkenny, where we were no less entertained by the earl of Ormond. There on New Year's Day the archbishop of Dublin preached the word of God, having very good audience, and published the king's injunctions, and the king's translation of the Pater Noster, Ave Maria, the articles of faith, and Ten Commandments in English: divers papers whereof we delivered to the bishop and other prelates of the diocese, commanding them to do the like throughout their jurisdictions. The Saturday following we repaired to Ross, which town having been heretofore one of the best towns of this land; being also situated in the best place of those parts for subduing of the Kavanaghs, is in manner utterly decayed and waste, by reason of the continual war and annoyance of the Kavanaghs, which cannot be helped whilst the Kavanaghs remain unreformed. There the morning after, the said archbishop preached:

* "Constat multa monasteria fuisse ornatissima et opulentissima quæ omnia impius iste (Henricus) diripuit, vastavit et solo æquavit: nec Bibliothecis vel ullis litterarum antiquitatis monumentis aut sanctorum Reliquiis pepercit, illud barbarum usurpans dictum, corvorum nidos esse penitus distarbandos ne postea iterum ad cohabitandum convolarent." (Disputatio Apologet. etc. by Con. O'Mahony, Francfort, 1645.)

† State Papers, vol. iii. pp. 108-116.

that night we went to Wexford, where the same archbishop preached on the Epiphany day, having a great audience, and publishing the said injunctions. The Saturday following the Epiphany we came to Waterford, where the mayor and his brethren during our abode both well entertained us, and used themselves obediently in conforming themselves to our orders and directions. There, the Sunday, my lord of Dublin preached, having a very great audience, where also we published the king's injunctions. The day following we kept the sessions there, both for the city and the shire, where was put to execution four felons, accompanied with another, a friar, whom among the residue, we commanded to be hanged in his habit, and so to remain upon the gallows for a mirror to all his brethren to live truly.

"At the writing hereof, we are at Clonmel, where we keep sessions this day; and on Sunday the archbishop of Dublin will preach here, in the presence of all the bishops of Munster, who, upon our commandment, have repaired hither for the most part already."

All the efforts of the government and its emissaries were employed to render these sessions at Clonmel the beginning of a new era in the cause of reformation. Every prelate throughout Ireland who was devoted to the English monarch, and every bishop who, despite of the canonical appointment, had been intruded into the Irish sees, was summoned to attend; and the members of the Irish council were able to boast in their letter of 8th February, 1539,* that two archbishops and eight bishops graced the meeting by their presence, and took the oath of the king's supremacy. Who these prelates were, is not mentioned; and this silence seems to imply that but few, if any, of the canonically-appointed bishops could be numbered amongst them. The archbishops were probably Dr. Browne of Dublin, and Dr. Bodkin of Tuam. This latter prelate had been intruded into that see by the authority of Henry, in 1537,† and whilst the canonically-appointed archbishop, Dr. Arthur O'Farrell,‡ (or O'Frighi), was obliged to feed his flock in poverty and in disguise, Dr. Bodkin continued, during the reigns of Henry and Edward,

* State Papers, vol. iii. p. 117.

† Harris's Ware, page 615: his app. was on the 15th February, 1536, styl. vet., i. e., 1537.

‡ Acta Consist. ex Archiv. Vatic., ad an. 1538. The statement of Hardiman, "Iar-Connaught," page 228, that Dr. Bodkin admitted the king's supremacy, is correct; the subsequent assertion, however, that "in the reign of Elizabeth he again conformed to the religion of the state," is utterly erroneous. We shall have to speak more at length of this archbishop in the life of "Hugh Curwin," next chapter.

to hold the temporalities of the see. The bishops bore, probably, a similar character. We only know for certain that one of them, for various misdemeanours, was deposed by the lord deputy, as Dr. Browne bitterly laments, in a letter addressed to the lord privy seal, a few days after the meeting in Clonmel, from which, too, we may glean that that prelate was bishop "in O'Brene's country;" and another, Dr. Nangle of Clonfert, could never even obtain possession of the temporalities of his see, through the opposition of M'William, a chieftain of that district, who, in the words of Dr. Browne, being "a naughty traitorous person," supported the bishop appointed by Rome; and when Nangle showed to him the king's "broad seal" for his appointment to that see, the Irish chieftain avowed his contempt for such a royal nomination, and "threw it away and vilepended the same."*

We cannot, therefore, be surprized that this assemblage of prelates did not suffice for the zeal of Dr. Browne. Writing to lord Cromwell, on the 16th of February, the same year, he makes known his determination to travel "as far as any English can be understood," in order to preach the king's supremacy: his charity even embraced the uncouth inhabitants who were unacquainted with the English language; and hence he "provided a suffragan named Dr. Nangle, bishop of Clonfert," to set forth "the word of God and our prince's cause," in the inharmonious accents of the Irish tongue.† The subsequent letters of Dr. Browne are, however, silent as to any such perilous journey amongst the wild natives of our island; and it is probable that, deterred by the tale of Dr. Nangle, he did not venture at any later period to seek a premature martyrdom beyond the precincts of the English pale.

On Easter day, 1551, the liturgy was solemnly read for the first time in the English tongue in Christ's Church cathedral, and the archbishop on that occasion took for his text the words of the royal psalmist: "Open my eyes that I may see the wonders of thy law." The order of Edward VI., with which Dr. Browne thus earnestly complied, set forth that "his father of happy memory thought it most fit and convenient for the

* State Papers, vol. iii. page 122.

† State Papers, loc. cit. page 122.

preservation of the souls and bodies of his subjects, that the Holy Scriptures should be translated, printed, and placed in all parish churches within his dominions;”* and hence he now, “for the general benefit of his well-beloved subjects’ understandings, whenever assembled either to pray or to hear prayers read, that they may the better join therein, in unity of hearts and voice, caused the liturgy to be translated into our mother tongue of this realm.”†

It is difficult to conceive anything more ludicrous than that the facilitating of the liturgy to the Irish people should be thus assigned as the motive for translating it into the English tongue, and for commanding the use of its English version in all the churches throughout the kingdom. We shall see hereafter how even during Elizabeth’s reign, not one in a thousand of the Irish people could understand “the English jargon,” as it was styled, and how this happy ignorance was an insuperable barrier to the spread of the contagion of heresy. For the present, one instance will suffice. It was precisely at this period that Dr. Cranmer of Canterbury was busily employed in procuring a bishop for the see of Armagh. At length his choice was made; but to his surprise, the elected prelate declined the proffered dignity, assigning the unanswerable reason, “*If he went thither, he would have no auditors; for the people understood no English.*”‡

Dr. Browne had been from the commencement the main-spring of the Protestant movement, and the energy which he displayed in introducing the English liturgy crowned all his merits in the royal cause. As his reward, the grateful king and council of England, by a decree of 20th October, 1551, declared the see of Armagh deprived of the primacy of all Ireland, whilst that high dignity was now *annexed to the see of Dublin for ever*.

From the first years of his episcopate, this had been the fond object of Browne’s ambition, and in all probability he would

* Phoenix, vol. i. page 128.

† Ibid.

‡ Mant, loc. cit. i. 215. So persuaded was the government of the utter uselessness of the English liturgy in Ireland, that it was endeavouring at this very time to procure for the Irish parish churches a *Latin translation* of the communion service. See Shirley’s “Original Letters,” page 47; Letter of the lord deputy to Mr. secretary Cecil, 19th January, 1551.

have attained it ten years earlier, were it not for the momentary weakness and pliancy of the archbishop of Armagh. Dr. Cromer, an Englishman,* had been advanced to the primatial see at the nomination of the king in 1522. On the first efforts of Henry to introduce schism into the Irish Church, none displayed greater courage than the primate in asserting the Catholic doctrine, and upholding the supremacy of the successors of St. Peter. When the act of royal supremacy received the sanction of parliament, he indignantly withdrew from the metropolis, and having convened the suffragans and chief clergy of the province, he exhorted them to resist the progress of innovation, and to preserve unsullied the glorious title of *the holy isle*, by which Ireland was celebrated for so many centuries; and in conjunction with them he pronounced anathema against all who should swerve from the due allegiance to the Holy See and acknowledge the spiritual supremacy of the crown.† During all this time Father Gillebride, or Brigidian, superior of the order of Trinitarians in Armagh, was his intimate friend; and nothing of any moment was undertaken without his counsel. By degrees, however, a deaf ear was turned to the counsels of the good father; and whilst the archbishop was alarmed at the growing confederation of the Irish chieftains, the example of his countrymen in England, and affection for the monarch, to whom he was indebted for the primatial see, deadened the ardour of his faith and slackened the vigour with which he hitherto had opposed the schismatical acts of Henry. This weakness of Dr. Cromer, whilst it marred the designs of Browne, awakened the alarm of Rome. In the consistory of 13th of July, 1539, sentence of suspension from all exercise of primatial jurisdiction was promulgated against him, till such time as he should purge himself of the suspicion of heresy; and in the interim, Robert Wauchop was, on the same day, appointed apostolic administrator of the see of Armagh.‡ From the fact of no sub-

* Ware, Harris, etc. See Flanagan, "British and Irish History," pag. 435.

† See Stuart's "Historical Memoirs," etc. pag. 229 seqq.

‡ Acta Consistorialia in Archiv. Vallicell. The supposition that Dr. Wauchop was blind from his youth, is wholly devoid of foundation. The German witticism, "*Scotus coecus oculatis Germanis*," on which some writers place too much reliance, only implies that he was suffering from weakness of sight; and the consistorial acts expressly declare the same: "*debilitatem visus patientem*."

sequent sentence being pronounced against him, we may conclude that Cromer voluntarily resigned his archiepiscopal charge; and before the close of 1540, we find Dr. Wauchop elevated to the dignity of archbishop of Armagh.*

It was only in December, 1543, that Dr. Dowdall was intruded by Henry into the primatial see.† It was expected that thus appointed, he would be pliant to the monarch's wishes; but to the surprise of the court, soon after his episcopal consecration he put himself at the head of the orthodox party, and during the following years laboured incessantly in defence of the Catholic faith. His crowning offence was his opposition to the introduction of the new liturgy in 1550. Sir Anthony St. Leger, the viceroy, convoked the prelates, and notified to them the king's command, that the English liturgy should be used in all their churches. Dr. Dowdall opposed this innovation in strong and energetic language, and his opposition happily resulted in complete success. Of all his suffragans only the Protestant Staples accepted the royal order;‡ and whilst the profane innovators were everywhere received with universal execration, Dowdall's name became a theme of eulogy, and was hailed with benediction throughout the whole island. From that day his doom was decreed: the see of Armagh was declared by the king and council deprived of the primacy, and this first dignity of our church was awarded to Dr. Browne, the foremost champion of the royal cause. Dr. Dowdall was at once subjected to innumerable vexations, which in 1552 obliged him at length to seek a refuge on the continent.§ On the 10th of November, 1551, Dr. Wauchop had passed to his eternal reward: and the unanimous voice of the Irish Catholics solicited the appointment of Dowdall, now a confessor for the faith, as his

* Epis. Cochlæi to Wauchop in Nov. 1540: in Archiv. Secret. Vatican.

† Harris's Ware, p. 91.

‡ It reflects great honour on our Church, that the only prelates who united with Browne and Staples in introducing the new liturgy, were Robert Travers of Leighlin, and Thomas Lancaster of Kildare, both of whom had been intruded by the court into their respective sees about six months before. Ware's Bishops, also Reid's Hist. of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, vol. i. pp. 30-1, who adds Dr. Coyn of Limerick; but in this he errs.—See Shirley, loc. cit. pp. 47-8.

§ Without any sentence of deposition against Dowdall, Hugh Goodacre was appointed archbishop of Armagh, by order of Edward VI., on 28th October, 1552.

successor in the primatial see. This voice was heard in Rome, and on the 1st of March, 1553, Dr. Dowdall was proposed in consistory as successor to the deceased archbishop of Armagh.* Thus did he merit, by his constancy in the true faith, and by his sufferings for the Catholic cause, to be absolved from the guilt of schism, and advanced to the primacy of our church; whilst with the death of Edward, on the 6th July, 1553, even the civil primacy of Dr. Browne came to a dishonoured close.

From the brief sketch which we have now presented of the efforts of the English government to destroy the Catholic Church in Ireland, it results, that to the unflinching constancy of our bishops we are mainly indebted for the preservation in all its purity of the faith of our fathers. At the first commencement of the reformation some of the Irish sees were filled by Henry's nominees, who were devoted to his interests, and pliant to his will. However, before danger became imminent, these had passed away, and thanks to the watchful vigilance of Rome, new shepherds were appointed to tend the Redeemer's flock and guard our faithful people from the poisoned pastures presented to them. Thus, for instance, within the three years from 1538 to 1541, at least sixteen bishops were appointed by the Holy See to the vacant dioceses of Ireland. Protestant historians, indeed, have sought to consign to oblivion the names of these great and holy men who thus, despite privations and persecutions, handed down to us the sacred deposit of faith; but it is the duty of Irish

* Our historians, both Catholic and Protestant, seem to have been hitherto persuaded that it was at the request of queen Mary, Dr. Dowdall was recognized in the see of Armagh. However, we learn from the consistorial acts that it was far otherwise. During the year 1552 the friends of Ireland in Rome more than once solicited his appointment; and in the consistory of 23rd January, 1553, cardinal Maffei, to whom the matter had been referred, solemnly proposed his nomination to Armagh. The Vatican Registry of that consistory thus notices this nomination: "*Proposuit Ecclesiam Armachanam Primatiam Hiberniæ, vacantem per obitum Roberti, pro eo qui alias absque provisione sedis apostolicæ in illius regimine se immiscuerat et fuit remissum negotium ad proximum consistorium.*" The Registry of the Vallicellian Archives gives his nomination in almost the identical words. It being a matter of universal importance, cardinal Maffei received instructions to submit all the documents connected with the case to the cardinals then present in Rome, and in the mean time the Holy Father deferred his decision till he should receive their counsel. At length, on the 1st of March, 1553, his appointment to Armagh is thus registered: "*Cardinali Maffei referente providit (sua sanctitas) ecclesiæ Armacanæ de persona Georgii Dowdall prioris prioratus de Atrio Dei ordinis cruciferorum, Armacanæ diocesis, cum retentione dicti prioratus; ipsumque illi in archiepiscopum præfecit.*"

Catholics to revere their memory, and treasure up the example of virtue and heroism which their lives present to us.

8.—*Character of the Reformers.*

The report of the commissioners appointed in 1538 to inquire into the state of the kingdom, would suffice to convince every impartial reader, that all the new apostles who were sent by king Henry to propagate his reformation in Ireland, were not models of perfection or masters of virtue. In it* complaints are made of undue fees being exacted by the bishops and their officials; many of the reformed clergy are charged with extortion for baptisms, marriages, and other ecclesiastical functions. Some, too, are accused of taking *portion-cause*; that is, of seizing (after a man's death) on his best apparel, sword and knife, or of levying a tax on the property that was bequeathed. More revolting to the piety of the Irish people was the newly-imported theory, of the reformed clergy receiving the fruits of benefices, though they no longer performed the sacred functions for which such benefices were founded; and from Clonmel the charge was especially insisted on, that the new teachers took to themselves wives; and often, too, had children, without even the semblance of lawful wedlock.

The Catholic clergy of Ireland have ever been remarkable for the special lustre of their chastity. The contrary vice soon became a characteristic mark of the reformers, so that as early as 1542, the king deemed it necessary to thus write to the lord deputy: "We think it meet, that seeing we have passed here the act for the continency of the clergy, you should, in like manner, follow, or at least upon consideration of the state of the country, cause such a reasonable plan to be devised as may be to the avoiding of that sin, and to the advancement of the honest name and fame of our clergy of that realm."†

As regards the general fruit of the reformed tenets throughout Ireland, we may form some idea of it from the letter of Dr. Browne to the king, on the 28th of February, 1545: "Most gracious prince," he writes, "here reigneth insatiable ambition, here reigneth continual coin and livery, and callid extortion

* State Papers, part 3rd, page 510.

† State Pap., vol. iii. page 428.

. I beseech God to preserve your grace, and to save all your English subjects from the trial of this country: *expertus loquor*.* Five years later, sir Anthony St. Leger writes, (September 27th, 1550) lamenting the universal decay of piety and religion: immorality, he says, everywhere prevails; the ministers are insulted, and divine service itself has ceased; and he condenses his opinion, as to the progress made by the reforming agents, in the pithy sentence: "I never saw the land so far out of good order."†

The instructions, too, which accompanied the proclamation of Henry, as king of Ireland, reveal to us some important features of the ecclesiastical administration of the province of Munster: church dignities and benefices, we are told, were held by persons who had no ecclesiastical orders, and never resided in their cure; sometimes mere boys were advanced to church preferments, and even some of the episcopal body were found not to exercise their jurisdiction "according to the law of God and the canons."‡

More than once, indeed, the lord deputy was obliged to complain of the transgressions and indifference of the reformed bishops. Thus, on 15th March, 1551, sir James Croft (lord deputy) writes to Cecil: "The bishops, as I find, be negligent, and few learned, and none of any good zeal, as it seemeth."§ Another lord deputy, as we have seen, as early as 1539 found it necessary, on his own authority, to depose one of the bishops lately appointed by the crown; whilst the bishop appointed to the see of Leighlin by Edward VI. is described by a local annalist as "cruel, covetous, and vexing his clergy."||

The three leading agents, however, of the English court in reforming our Irish church, were Dr. Browne of Dublin, Dr. Staples of Meath, and Dr. Bale of Ossory. As regards Dr. Browne, we have already seen how Henry, in his letter of 7th July, 1537, speaks of his *lightness of behaviour, the elation of his mind in pride, and of all virtue and honesty being banished from him*. Twelve months later he seems not to have made much

* State Papers, vol. iii. p. 557.

† See the orig. lett. in Shirley, loc. cit., pp. 41-2.

‡ Cox, i. 270.†

§ Shirley, Orig. Lett. pp. 63-4.

|| Dowling's Annals, edit. R.I.A. 1849, p. 38.

progress in the path of virtue,* if we can give credence to the contemporary Protestant bishop of Meath, who writes to lord St. Leger, on 17th June, 1538:† “I have written unto you, by John Plunkett, much of my trouble by the bishop of Dublin, and the occasion of the same. He now boasteth himself to rule all the clergy under our sovereign lord, and he hath given a taste of his good demeanour, that every honest man is not only weary thereof, but reckoneth that pride and arrogance hath ravished him from the right remembrance of himself. I doubt not but you shall hear from others the specialities at large, from such as be indifferent; for surely he hath handled me and my poor friends for my sake most cruelly, so far as he might.” As to his subsequent career, we have no direct source of information; but perhaps we may justly infer that his life was not one of the most edifying, from the words of the Protestant bishop of Ossory, who tells us, that on his seeking to reform the corrupt morals of some of his ministers in 1553, “they would at no hand obey, *alleging for their vain and idle excuse, the lewd example of the archbishop of Dublin, who was always slack in things pertaining to God’s glory.*”‡ And the same writer, in his own coarse strain, subsequently accuses him of “drunkenness and gluttony,” and calls him *an epicurious archbishop, a brockish swine, and a dissembling proselyte.*

The character of Dr. Staples seems to have borne the same stamp as that of Dr. Browne. The editors of the “State Papers” inform us, that the king sent an admonition to Staples identical with that sent to the archbishop of Dublin; and Dr. Browne himself, writing to a member of the council, on 15th of April, 1538,§ speaks of Dr. Staples as having preached *without any honest shame*, and in such a manner “as I think the three-mouthed Cerberus of hell could not have uttered it more viperiously.”

* “As for teaching and preaching, these were utterly neglected, indeed not so much as thought of, unless occasionally, as when the chancellor once exclaimed, ‘How should men know their duties when they shall not hear teaching or preaching from one end of the year to the other.’”—*Liber. Mun. Hib.* part i. p. 37.

† *State Papers*, iii. p. 29.

‡ *Bale’s Vocacyon*, p. 414, reprinted in *Harl. Misc.*, vol. vi. In Shirley, p. 18, are given articles of accusation against Dr. Browne, written in 1548. One of them accuses the archbishop of making *alienations, etc., of most of his bishopric to his children and others.*

§ *State Papers*, vol. iii. p. 1.

The bishop of Ossory has not found many eulogists even amongst his brother reformers; and Dr. Mant confesses that "with an uncommon warmth of temperament, he allowed himself the use of an unbecoming coarseness, and even grossness of expression."* The people of Kilkenny seem to have been soon tired of his ministrations; and his flight from that city on the accession of queen Mary, is one of the most remarkable events in the history of the restoration of the Catholic religion. Even during the reign of Elizabeth he did not venture to revisit the former scene of his labours,—so persuaded was he of the utter absence of sympathy and respect for him amongst its inhabitants. He retired to Canterbury, and died there in obscurity in 1563.†

9—*The Reformation of Henry, a failure in Ireland.*

From a cursory glance at some of the passages cited in the preceding pages, from the reports of Dr. Browne, and other English agents in Ireland, the reader might, perhaps, conclude that our island joyously embraced the boon of the English reformation. The Protestant archbishop, indeed, more than once depicted, in glowing colours, the happy fruits of his zeal in propagating the new tenets in Ireland. Yet all this was a mere delusion,—the commencement of that mighty delusion which, for three hundred years, the Protestant establishment has continued to be in Ireland. Whilst the reformed doctrines remained unheard-of in most of the Irish districts, innumerable records of the period attest that, even within the pale, but little progress was made in the work of proselytism. Hence, our task in this article will be an easy one, and it will suffice to quote some passages from these records, to illustrate the true extent of *the reformation* in our Irish church.

A private letter of Browne to Cromwell, on 8th of January, 1538,‡ thus describes the opposition made by the clergy, especially in the diocese of Dublin:

"It may please your lordship to be advertised, that within these

* Hist. of Ir. Ch., i. 226.

† The reader will find many curious facts connected with this unworthy individual in Harris's Ware, p. 417; Brennan's "Eccles. Hist." vol. ii. p. 99.

‡ State Paper, vol. ii. page 539.

parts of Ireland, which grieveth me very sore,—yea, and that within the diocese of Dublin and province of the same, where the king's power ought to be best known, where it hath pleased his most excellent highness to make me a spiritual officer, and chief over the clergy; yet neither by gentle exhortation, evangelical instruction—neither by oaths solemnly taken, nor yet by threats of sharp correction, can I persuade or induce any, either religious or secular, since my coming over, once to preach the word of God, or the just title of our most illustrious prince There is never an archbishop nor bishop, but myself, made by the king, but he is repelled even now by provision; again, for all that ever I could do, might I not make them once, but as I send mine own servants to do it, to cancel out of the canon of the Mass, or other books, the name of the bishop of Rome, whereby your lordship may perceive that my authority is little regarded.”

About the same time, a king's justiciary, named White, made an inspection of the counties of Wexford, Waterford, Kilkenny, and Tipperary, and in his report to the lord privy seal,* he declares that he found but one city (Kilkenny) and one gentleman, lord Butler, who had embraced the reformation, whilst all the people were imbued with “an evil and erroneous opinion of the king's most noble grace, and of all those that under his majority, be the setters forth of the true word of God.” Whether the remark, as far as regards Kilkenny, be true, will be illustrated hereafter by the fact of the expulsion of the Protestant bishop Bale from the precincts of that fine old Catholic city.

Many of the letters of Dr. Browne are written in a most desponding strain. Thus, we have already seen how in his letter to lord Cromwell, on 28th November, 1535, he described the Irish natives, as “more zealous in their blindness than the saints and martyrs” of the early church; and again, on 29th March, 1538, he writes to the same: “the people of this nation be zealous, yet blind and unknowing The country folk here much hate your lordship, and despitefully call you, in their Irish tongue, *the blacksmith's son* Rome hath great favour for this nation, purposely to oppose his highness; therefore my hope is lost, yet my zeal is to do according to your lordship's orders.”† On the 8th May, same year, he laments the disobedience of a prebendary of St. Patrick's who, when ordered to read the new set form of prayers, “*thought scorn to read them,*”

* State Papers, vol. ii., page 562.

† Phoenix, loc. cit., pp. 123-4.

and he adds: "they be, in a manner, all at the same point with me. There are twenty-eight of them, and yet scarce one that favoureth God's word."*

Subsequently he informs the lord privy seal of the union in opposition to the reformation, which had sprung up between those of English descent and the old Irish race. "It is observed (he says) that ever since his highness's ancestors had this nation in possession, the old natives have been craving foreign powers to assist and rule them; and now both English race and Irish begin to oppose your lordship's orders, and to lay aside their national old quarrels,† which I fear will, if anything will, cause a foreigner to invade this nation.—(Cox's Hib. Anglic. vol. i. pp. 256-258; Macariæ Excid., edit. by Royal Ir. Acad., 1850, page 288).

Even as late as 19th May, 1540, he laments the indocility of our country, in refusing to adopt the newly-fashioned creed: "I trust the time of amendment be at hand; howbeit, since ever I heard the name of Ireland first, the country was never farther out of order."‡

Other leading members of the government, from time to time, betrayed the same despondency regarding the Irish people. Thus, Agard writes to Cromwell on 5th April, 1538.§ "Here as yet the blood of Christ is clean blotted out of all men's hearts . . . except it be the archbishop of Dublin, and my good lord Butler, the master of the rolls, Mr. Treasurer, and one or two more, which are of a small reputation; here is else none, from the highest to the lowest, who may abide the hearing of God's word, spiritual, as they call them, nor temporal, and

* State Papers, vol. iii. page 6.

† This confederacy threatened for awhile the complete annihilation of the English power. Robert Cowley writes to Cromwell on 8th September, 1539: "There never was seen in Ireland so great a host of Irishmen and Scots," the motive of it being, he adds, that "they considered the king a heretic;" and this spirit, too, he says, pervaded the English pale. (State Papers, vol. iii. page 145.) On the 18th January, 1540, the lord deputy Gray informed the king that the detestable traitors, young Gerald, O'Neil, O'Donel, the pretended Earl of Desmond, O'Brene, O'Conor, and O'Mulmoy had well nigh subdued the whole country "to the supremacy of the pope." (Ibid. page 148.) See further details of this confederacy in the "The Earls of Kildare," by the marquis of Kildare: Dublin 1858, page 180-1.

‡ State Papers, vol. iii. page 308. In another letter (Ibid. page 35) Dr. Browne laments that many who outwardly "feigned themselves maintainers of the gospel, have it not inwardly in their hearts."

§ State Papers, vol. ii. page 569.

especially they that here rule all, that is, the temporal lawyers who have the king's fee."

Cowley writes, the same year (19th July), in a like strain: "Sorry I am to hear such abuses; praying God that the employment of the king's treasure exhausted, and all his grace's resource in Ireland do not work to the confusion of the king's true subjects.....More sorry am I to hear how the papistical sect springs up and spreads abroad, infecting the land pestiferously."

Some years later (in 1548) Dr. Staples, the Protestant bishop of Meath, writing to the secretary of the lord deputy,† thus depicts the sentiments of the people of his own diocese regarding his evangelical ministrations: "One gentlewoman to whom I did christen a child, which beareth my name, came in great alarm to a friend of mine, desiring how she might find means to change her child's name: and he asked her why, and she said: because I would not have him bear the name of an heretic. A gentleman, dwelling nigh unto me, forbade his wife, who would have sent her child to be confirmed by me, so to do; saying, his child should not be confirmed by him that denied the sacrament of the altar. A friend of mine, rehearsing at the market that I would preach the next Sunday at Navan, divers answered they would not come there lest they should learn to be heretics. One of our lawyers declared to a multitude that it was a great pity that I was not burned; for I preached heresy. . . . A beneficed man, of mine own promotion, came unto me weeping, and desired me that he might declare his mind unto me without my displeasure: I said I was well content. My lord, said he, before you went last to Dublin, you were the best beloved man in your diocese, and now you are the worst beloved that ever came here. I asked why. Why, said he, for you have taken open part with the state—that false heretick, and preached against the sacrament of the altar, and deny saints, and will make us worse than Jews; wherefore if the country could, they would eat you: and he besought me to take heed of myself, for he feared more than he durst tell me. He said, you have more curses than you have hairs in your head, and I advise you not to preach at Navan, as I hear you intend to do," etc.

* State Papers, vol. iii. page 50. † Shirley, "Original Letters," p. 22.

This is a faithful picture of how little sympathy there existed, at the close of Henry's reign, and during the first years of Edward's government, between the people of Ireland and the heretical clergy. The violent attempts made by Bale and others in the following years, only served to awaken the ardour of the Catholic population, and even Dr. Mant confesses, that during the reign of Edward, no progress was made in *the reformation*; partly, as he says, on account of *the timidity of counsels during the king's minority*, and partly (or, we would rather say, wholly) through *the intractable temper of the people, and their inveterate attachment to the Church of Rome*.^{*} Were further evidence required, we would find it in the letter of the lord deputy St. Leger, who writes from Dublin on 5th December, 1550:†—“Now as touching the bishopric void, it shall be well done some honest man be placed therein for the advancement of religion, *which, although it hath been here much talked of these two or three years past, yet hath it been smally set forth in deed*; and, perchance, if the disposition of men here were thoroughly known, it would be thought a thing not easy to be brought to pass.”‡

There were some indeed who took the oath of allegiance, but as yet this was regarded by many as only an acknowledgment of fealty to their monarch: it was supposed by the natives not to involve the denial of any doctrine of faith, and it was explained by the court, as we have already seen in the words of Dr. Browne, that it only granted to Henry what many other Catholic and sainted kings had exacted from their subjects. Perhaps many of those who thus offered their allegiance never even enquired into the precise terms of the oath; but when it was proposed to abandon the Catholic Church, and renounce their affection for the see of Peter, we have sufficiently shown that such proposals were rejected with disdain, and that the Irish people remained immoveably attached to the faith of their fathers.

The rejoicing with which they hailed the accession of queen

^{*} Hist. of Ir. Ch. vol. i. p. 228.

[†] Shirley, p. 45-6.

[‡] In Shirley (remarks on Letter the 7th), is cited a passage from some interrogatories made by the government in 1548, with the answers received: “How is the word of God set forth in this realm? (answer) *the dedes* (that is, *not at all*). How many friar-houses and others remain using the old Papist sorte? (answer) *all Munster, Thomond, Connaught, and Ulster*.”

Mary, and the restoration of the Catholic worship, is of itself a sure guarantee of their unswerving devotedness to the ancient faith. It was on the 31st of August, 1553, that the clergy of Kilkenny resolved to restore the cathedral of St. Canice to Catholic worship. Dr. Bale, the most violent of the reformers, was the Protestant bishop, and Ormond was his patron. The death of the king had not as yet been publicly proclaimed, still the people would brook no delay. "To the utter contempt of king and council of England," as Bale himself writes, they rang all the bells in the fine old cathedral and parish churches; in the exuberance of their joy, "they flung up their caps to the battlements of the great temple;" a solemn procession was formed; once more the canons walked forth "with their capes, candlesticks, holywater, crosses, and censers;" the litany was intoned, and the hearts of the citizens were cheered with the oft-repeated Catholic anthem, "*Sancta Maria, ora pro nobis.*"* The Protestant bishop himself was treated with every opprobrium, and obliged to fly in disgrace to the stronghold of puritanism.† And yet this was not the first time that Bale had witnessed the enthusiasm of the good people of Kilkenny in the cause of their time-honoured faith. Six months before, when, on his first appointment, he publicly proclaimed the tenets of king Edward, a tumult at once ensued: "five of his attendants were slain before his face, and he himself was obliged to shut himself up from the fury of the populace within the iron gates of his castle, from which critical situation he was relieved only by the civil magistrate at the head of 500 soldiers."‡

The same spirit was everywhere manifested throughout the kingdom; especially in those parts where Catholic devotions had been for awhile prescribed by the government, festive rejoicings marked the triumph of their sacred cause. Nowhere do we find the slightest trace of any opposition to the recognition of the Holy See. In fact, says the writer just now referred to, "on the accession of Mary to the throne, so little had been

* Bale's *Vocacyon*, ap. Mant, i. 232.

† White, in his *Apology*—"Joannem Baleum Anglum . . . noluerunt Hiberni recipere, sed ut catholicos eorum animos decebat, cum ignominia exulare coegerunt et confugere ad Calvinismi arcem et metropolim. Genevam."

—p 47.

‡ Liber. Mun. Hib., part i. p. 37.

done in the advancement of the reformation, that there was little or nothing to undo. She issued a license for the celebration of Mass in Ireland, where no other service was or had been celebrated worth mentioning, and where no other supreme head had been ever in earnest acknowledged but the pope."*

CHAPTER II.

APPOINTMENT OF HUGH CURWIN TO THE SEE OF DUBLIN— HIS ACTS AND APOSTACY.

1. Early Life of Dr. Curwin.—2. Chief Events of his Episcopate.—3. His apostacy and translation to Oxford.—4. Constancy of the Irish in their faith.

It is a remarkable circumstance that the only Englishman who, since the sad era of the reformation, was elevated to the see of St. Laurence O'Toole, should be, at the same time, the only bishop on its long roll of sainted names who dishonoured it by a vile apostacy.

1.—*Early Life of Dr. Curwin.*

Hugh Curwin was a native of Westmoreland, in England, and boasted a high lineage from the earls of Northumberland. He enjoyed a fair literary fame, was doctor of laws, dean of Hereford, and, according to some of his biographers, archdeacon of Oxford. In matters of religion, however, he made worldly utility the rule of his conscience; hence, during four successive reigns, he fashioned his creed according to the tenets of his royal patrons, and his character was well sketched by Strype, when he styled him *a complier in all reigns*.*

The first question by which Curwin acquired notoriety, and won the favor of Henry VIII., was that of the king's marriage

* Lib. Mun. Hib, part i. p. 37.

† Life of Cranmer, p. 54.

with Anne Boleyn. Corrupt though the court of the English monarch was at this period, yet exemplary priests were not wanting, who boldly admonished him of his crimes, and denounced his violation of God's law. In 1533 a Franciscan friar named Peto, "a simple man," writes Stowe, "but very devout," preached before the king at Greenwich, and took for his text the words of the prophet: "Even where the dogs licked the blood of Naboth, even there shall the dogs lick thy blood also, O King." Amongst other things he did not fear to address the following words to the proud monarch: "I am that Micheas whom thou wilt hate, because I must tell thee truly that this marriage is unlawful; and I know I shall eat the bread of affliction, and drink the water of sorrow; yet, because the Lord hath put it into my mouth, I must speak it."

On the following Sunday, the courtiers deemed it expedient that the favourite tenets of the king should be eulogized in a strain equally bold and impressive, and Hugh Curwin was the orator chosen for the occasion. The fact of his having been thus selected, sufficiently proves what an ardent advocate he had shown himself of Henry's divorce. Nevertheless, the discourse of this favorite orator was the occasion of an additional mortification to the court party. Curwin, indeed, used the severest language in regard of Peto and his preaching; he styled him "a slanderer, a rebel, and a traitor," and used other most opprobrious epithets, adding, that no subject should speak so audaciously to princes. Having said much on that head, and in commendation of the king's marriage, he concluded, raising his voice, and exclaiming, "I speak to thee Peto, who makest thyself Micheas, that thou mayst speak evil of kings, but now thou art not to be found, being fled for fear and shame, as being unable to answer my arguments." The orator well knew that Peto was absent; for the superior of his order, suspecting that a storm was impending over the courageous friar, sent him to assist at a meeting of the clergy, which had been convened at Canterbury. But in the assembly addressed by Dr. Curwin, there was present a companion of Peto, equally zealous in the cause of truth, and equally heedless of the monarch's indignation. His name was Elstow, and standing in the rood loft, he, in a loud voice, thus addressed the preacher:

"Good sir, you know that Father Peto, as he was commanded, is now gone to a provincial council holden at Canterbury, and not fled for fear of you, for to-morrow he will return again: in the meantime I am here, as another Micheas, and will lay down my life to prove all these things true which he hath taught out of the Holy Scripture; and to this combat I challenge thee, before God and all equal judges; even thee, Curwin, I say, who art one of the four hundred prophets, into whom the spirit of lyeing is entered, and seekest by adultery to establish succession, betraying the king into endless perdition; more for thy own vain glory and hope of promotion, than for discharge of thy clogged conscience and the king's salvation."

The fearless Franciscan continued in this strain till the king, in a rage, commanded him to be silent.

Whilst new dignities were marked out to reward Curwin for his servility, the two friars, Peto and Elstow, were cast into prison. This punishment, however, only served to complete their triumph; and so fearless were they when summoned before the council, that on the earl of Essex telling them "they deserved to be put into a sack and thrown into the Thames," Elstow smiling replied: "Threaten these things to rich and dainty folk, who are clothed in purple, fare deliciously, and have their chief hope in this world; for we esteem them not, but are joyful that in the discharge of our duties we are driven hence; and with thanks to God, we know that the way to heaven is as short by water as by land, and therefore we care not which way we go."*

On the question of supremacy Dr. Curwin was not less devoted to the crown; and he even publicly preached in favour of it.† It was also known that king Henry was warmly attached, through conviction or through pride, to the "Corporal presence," as the Catholic doctrine of the Blessed Eucharist was then called; and hence this tenet found an ardent supporter in our aspirant to court favour. Indeed, so zealous was he on this head that the death of Frith, for teaching the contrary heretical doctrine, was commonly laid at his door.

On the accession of queen Mary, the sentiments of Dr. Curwin were completely reformed on the questions of the royal supre-

* See Ellis's "Original Letters Illustrative of English History," ii. 41-2. and Edinb. Rev. January, 1825, p. 434.

† Strype, "Life of Parker," vol. i. p. 508.

‡ See Mant, "Hist. of Ch. in Ireland," p. 239.

macy and divorce; and so enthusiastic was the convert in defending the orthodox tenets, that he was at once appointed chaplain to her majesty. The see of Dublin was soon after deemed a fit promotion to reward his zeal, and on the 22nd of February, 1555, the royal license was issued to the cathedral chapter of Dublin, to proceed to his election as archbishop. This mandate, however, was preceded by a special letter from the queen, under her privy signet, and dated the 18th of February, being signed, moreover, with her own hand, "Marrye, the queene."*

This nomination of Dr. Curwin having been confirmed by the Holy See on the 15th of June, 1555,† he was consecrated in St. Paul's Cathedral, London, on the 8th of September the same year, and a few days later was appointed by her majesty lord chancellor of Ireland. Dr. Curwin without delay hastened to his new charge,‡ and on the 15th of the same month we find the following commendatory letter addressed to the dean and chapter of Christ's Church:

"MARY, THE QUEEN.

"TRUSTY AND WELL-BELOVED,—We greet you well: and forasmuch as the right reverend father in God, our right-trusty and well-beloved councillor, the archbishop of Dublin, being lately chosen for that see, repaireth speedily to that our realm of Ireland, as well to reside upon the cure of his bishopric, which now of long hath been destitute of a Catholic bishop, as also to occupy the office of our high chancellor of that our realm: although we have good hopes that ye will in all things of yourselves carry yourselves towards him as becometh you; yet to the intent he might govern the clergy committed unto him, to the

* Harris's Ware; also, Mant, loc. cit.

† See De Burgo "Hib. Dom." p. 817, whose assertion as to Curwin's appointment having been confirmed by the pope, rests on two unanswerable arguments: viz., its being published in consistory on the 15th June, 1555; and the pope's bull of appointment having emanated on the same day. In some lists Dr. Curwin is omitted, probably on account of his subsequent apostasy. For further evidence see next note.

‡ The royal order to the lord chancellor from Greenwich, on 13th Sept. 1555, for the restitution of the temporalities of the archbishopric, thus begins: "Whereas we have received from our holy Father the pope a bull, herein enclosed, by which you shall clearly understand that his Holiness, upon our recommendation, hath preferred unto the archbishopric of Dublin, in Ireland, our trusty and well-beloved chaplain, Hugh Curwin, whereupon he hath done unto us his homage and fealty," etc.—"Calendar of the Patent and Close Rolls of Chancery in Ireland." Edited by James Morrin. Dublin, 1861; vol. i. p. 339.

honour of Almighty God, we have thought fit to require and charge that for your part ye reverently receive him, honour and humbly obey him in all things as appertaineth to the duties tending to God's glory, our honour, and the common weal of that our realm, whereby ye shall please God and do us acceptable service.

"Given under our signet at our manor of Greenwich, the 15th day of September, in the third year of our reign."

2.—*Chief Events of Dr. Curwin's Episcopate.*

On his appointment to the see of Dublin, Dr. Curwin applied himself without delay to restore the ancient religion in all its splendour; and amongst his first acts we find recorded that he replaced in Christ Church the marble statue of our Saviour, which the Protestant bishop Browne had, some years before, caused to be thrown down and mutilated.

The first sermons of the archbishop won for him the applause of his Irish auditory. There is yet preserved amongst Ware's MSS. a contemporary letter which thus records the impression that was made by his inaugural discourse :

"May it please your lordship to be advertised that the archbishop of Dublin did preach his first sermon that he made in this land, the Sunday after St. Andrew, in Christ Church in Dublin, and did set forth the word of God in his sermon, sincerely and after such a sort, that those men that be learned and unlearned, both do give him as high praise as I have heard given to any one man; so that those men that favour the word of God are very glad of him, and prayeth for him so to continue."*

In 1556 Dr. Curwin convened a provincial council in Dublin, and in it many salutary laws were enacted regarding the due administration of the sacraments, and the observance of Catholic discipline.† One of its fruits was witnessed on the 2nd of July, that year, on the occasion of the solemn inauguration of the new lord deputy, when, to the great annoyance of the English Protestants, the Catholic ritual was carried out in all its splen-

* Ware's MSS. vol. 75, p. 180; ex Collect. to Dr. George Carew, *Lambeth MSS.*, lib. No. 602. pag. 136; apud. Mant, vol. i. p. 240.

† Loftus MS. Marsh's Lib. This MS. is "a collection of annals, unfinished; intended probably as the materials of a work never published." It does not preserve the decrees that were enacted, but merely records the fact of the synod being held. We are indebted for these particulars to Rev. Dr. Todd, vice-president of the Royal Irish Academy.

dour. Sir Anthony St. Leger, who had continued even after the death of Edward VI. to hold the viceregal authority in Ireland, had of late given displeasure to the queen by some satirical verses which he composed attacking the Catholic faith, and Thomas Ratcliffe, viscount Fitzwalter, subsequently made earl of Sussex, was appointed his successor. The 2nd of July was the day fixed for taking public possession of his high office; he proceeded to St. Patrick's Cathedral with a noble retinue; the archbishop arrayed in pontificals, and the clergy dressed in rich copes, were assembled at the church portals to receive him; immediately on entering he knelt beneath a rich canopy of state, and having been incensed, he kissed the cross, and received the blessing of the archbishop, after which he proceeded towards the high altar, where he continued kneeling whilst the hymn *Te Deum* was sung. Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament was then given by Dr. Curwin, after which the deputy arose from his place, proceeded to the foot of the altar, and having knelt there for a little while and taken the usual oath of office (Cox, i. 303), he made an offering of a piece of gold, and subsequently dined in state with the archbishop.*

The new lord deputy on coming to Ireland, received special instructions from her majesty to annul the heretical and penal acts of the preceding reign, and restore the Catholic religion to all its privileges; for instance, the first article required the deputy and council, "by their example, and all good means possible, to advance the honour of God and the Catholic faith, to set forth the honor and dignity of the pope's holiness, and See apostolic of Rome, and, from time to time, to be ready with their aid and secular force, at the request of all spiritual ministers and ordinaries, there to punish and repress all heretics, and Lollards, and their damnable sects, opinions, and errors, and to assist the commissioners of the legate, cardinal Pole, when visiting the clergy in Ireland."†

The Irish parliament met in Dublin on the 1st of June, 1557, and its first care was to receive the bull of Paul IV., which was transmitted through cardinal Pole, and conveyed pardon and forgiveness to all of the temporality and spirituality of her majesty's dominions who had swerved from the obedience

* Mason's St. Patrick's, p. 163.

† Ap. Mant, i. 243.

of the apostolic see, and fallen away from the unity of Christ's Church. The preamble of the act of parliament relates that this bull—

“Having been delivered by the lord deputy to archbishop Curwin, was, by him, devoutly and reverently received and read upon his knees in open parliament, deliberately and distinctly in an high voice. And the lords spiritual and temporal and the commons, in the name of themselves particularly, and also of the whole body of the realm, hearing the same, embraced it right reverently, and humbly kneeling upon their knees and yielding thanks, had *Te Deum* solemnly sung. And further, for a due proof of their repentance, they immediately proceeded to abrogate and repeal all the acts and statutes made in parliament since the twentieth year of king Henry VIII., against the See apostolical of Rome, according to the tenor and effect of the said bull.”*

The same act of parliament declares that much false and erroneous doctrine had been taught and preached by heretical innovators during the two preceding reigns; and thanks are rendered to Providence for having raised up their royal majesties “preserved by God's goodness from the common infection aforesaid.” The title of supreme head of the church was subsequently pronounced not to be justly attributed to any king or civil governor; it was moreover declared, that the bulls and dispensations from Rome should be allowed to be put in execution; and it was ordained that such authority, pre-eminence, and jurisdiction should be enjoyed by the Holy Father, as was due to his supremacy, and was enjoyed by him in the twentieth year of the reign of the king, her majesty's father, within this her realm of Ireland, and other her dominions.”

Another act was passed, giving civil sanction to the enactments of the ecclesiastical authorities, that thus they might be the better able to guard their flocks from erroneous and heretical teachers. Moreover, it was decreed that the first fruits paid to the crown on all ecclesiastical benefices, as well as the yearly tithes, should not in future be exacted. The rectories, glebe lands, and all other spiritual and ecclesiastical emoluments, which had been seized on by the crown during the two preceding reigns, were restored to the ecclesiastical authorities, with a proviso, however, that this act should not extend to, or affect in any way such

* 3 & 4 Philip & Mary, cap. viii.

grants of ecclesiastical property as had been made by the crown to private individuals, or to any public or civil corporations; thus, indeed, rendering null and nugatory the restitution of ecclesiastical property which was set forth in the act itself.

The government, however, did not take this step without consulting the Holy See. It was well known in the Roman court that the possession of church lands and other church property presented a main obstacle to the reunion of the English gentry with the Catholic Church; and hence, with a desire to facilitate their conversion, and thus procure a spiritual blessing for that straying portion of his fold, the Holy Father had destined cardinal Pole as his legate to England and Ireland, and authorised him, by special bull, to alienate such property and lands as had already passed into the hands of the laity; and the present act of the Irish parliament merely re-echoed the sentiments of this concession of the Holy See.

The decree of cardinal Pole, conveying the dispensation of the Holy Father, was dated "from Lambeth, the 6th of May, 1557." The Holy Father, he says, was moved to make these concessions by the testimony of many authoritative and prudent persons, who declared that such a dispensation would mainly contribute to preserve that unity of faith which was already happily avowed by their sovereign, and "from which depended the salvation of souls redeemed by the precious blood of Christ." All such as had shared in the plunder of the church property were then declared to be absolved by apostolic authority; all foundations of schools and collegiate or cathedral churches made by the crown during the period of schism were confirmed; marriages contracted during the same interval, and null through defect of dispensation from the Holy See, were convalidated; and, in a word, all concessions made or privileges granted, during the two preceding reigns, in virtue of the assumed authority of the spiritual supremacy of the crown, were legalized and sanctioned; and in particular the holders of ecclesiastical property were confirmed in the possession of their respective portions, and in such a manner that no future councils, whether provincial or general—no decrees of the Roman pontiffs, or other ecclesiastical authority, should in any way molest them or subject them to any censures whatsoever. Those, however,

into whose hands the sacred vessels of the altar might, perhaps, have come, are reminded of the severe judgment of God which fell upon the impious Balthasar; and hence they are exhorted to restore them to the churches from which they had been taken,—or, at least, to have them devoted to the divine service in some other place of Catholic worship. In fine, the possessors of such vicarages and lands as were destined for the maintenance of the parochial clergy, are exhorted to be mindful of the responsibility which rested upon their souls, that such clergy should have due and befitting means for their support, that thus they might be able to devote themselves to their sacred calling, and fulfil the duties imposed upon them.*

The Irish parliament, as we have seen, added its civil sanction to this dispensation of the cardinal legate; and, moreover, enacted the penalties of *præmunire* against all such as should impugn or oppose it. It also decreed that all churches to which the care of souls was annexed, and which hitherto had been subject to lay patronage, should be free and exempt from all such bonds, and be subject solely to the authority of the bishop or other ecclesiastical ordinary.†

That cardinal Pole, acting as papal legate to our Irish Church, should have held many investigations regarding the abuses which then prevailed, there can be but little room for doubt; and three documents connected with his legation which are preserved in the Vatican archives, throw some light on this period of our history.‡

The first document regards the appointment of William Walsh to the see of Meath. He was a native of the diocese, and having been, for many years, a member of the Cistercian Order, was enabled, by apostolic dispensation, to embrace the institute of the canons regular; and in 1554, when advanced to the see of Meath, he was professor of theology, and famed for

* See in Appendix the original *bullæ dispensationis* of cardinal Pole. It is painful to find the facts of history so sadly distorted as in the following extract from the editor of "The Life and Times of Sir P. Carew": "His (cardinal Pole's) chief concern, in conjunction with the queen, was to obtain restitution of the vast amount of property which had been wrested from the Church; but this being chiefly in the hands of the most powerful nobles, very great difficulties attended it, and neither of them lived long enough to accomplish the design." London, 1857; p. lxxviii.

† Ibid.

‡ Ex Archiv. Vatican. Secret.

piety and learning. Some years before, Dr. Walsh had visited Rome, and whilst there, lived as chaplain in the palace of cardinal Pole, and at the suggestion of his eminence, his name was now presented by the crown for the vacant see of Meath. This see was regarded as appertaining to the order of canons regular, and as the "*Relation*" continues, "though situated in Ireland is looked on as an English see; and the kings of England are accustomed to write for the appointment of its bishop, as they do for the dioceses of England. The see is, at present, wholly impoverished, in consequence of its property having been plundered during the period of schism." Dr. Walsh was, at the same time, prior of Duleek and Colpe, which belonged to the canons regular, and whose revenue of £214 sterling, had passed into lay hands; he was also rector of Luxseudy in the diocese of Meath, whose revenue of £40 sterling was yet peaceably enjoyed by the ecclesiastical incumbent.*

The second document contains an investigation concerning Dr. Christopher Bodkin, bishop of Kilmacduagh, who was nominated by the crown to the see of Tuam. This investigation was held at Lambeth, on the 18th of September, 1555; but no decision resulted from it, as the canonically-appointed archbishop, Dr. Arthur O'Frighi, was not represented at it. Rev. Peter Wall, archdeacon of Kilmacduagh, was the chief witness examined on the occasion; and from his evidence we glean many particulars regarding the diocese of Tuam. "The city of Tuam (says the *Relatio*) was, at one time, large and populous; but it is now in ruins, unfortified, and almost uninhabited. The river *Chorcha* flows through its centre; in its western segment is situated the cathedral church, dedicated under the invocation of the Blessed Virgin, which is a sufficiently large and ornamental edifice." This cathedral is further described as having "a high altar and two minor altars; a choir with the books necessary for chanting the divine

* For further particulars, see Harris' Ware, who correctly places his death in 1577. Henriquez in his *Menologium Cisterciens*, as also in his *Fasciculus Sanctorum*, etc., gives an interesting life of this holy bishop. We shall have occasion to dwell on his sufferings during the reign of Elizabeth, in a subsequent chapter. See also the valuable history of "The Diocese of Meath," by the Rev. A. Cogan, vol. i. p. 104, seqq.

office; a baptistery, a sacristy—being, moreover, sufficiently furnished with crucifixes, chalices, patenas (altar-cloths), vestments, and other sacred ornaments; it has a cemetery attached, and a belfry which is in ruins; there are three dignitaries, a dean, archdeacon, and provost, and ten or twelve canons. The diocese is sufficiently large; but its inhabitants are, for the most part, rude and untamed (*sylvestres et indomitos*); it has another cathedral church, named Anaghduagh, attached to it for many years." As regards the vacancy of the see, the deponent attests, that it was vacant for many years since the death of Thomas O'Molaly, the last Catholic bishop—on whose demise Dr. Christopher Bodkin, who had been appointed by the Holy See bishop of Kilmacduagh,* intruded himself into the see of Tuam, being confirmed by the authority of king Henry, and he still retains its possession, together with the see of Kilmacduagh. Being asked whether there was any other claimant for the see of Tuam, the same witness replied, that "Arthur O'Frighi, a native of Ulster, claimed it by appointment from the Holy See, as he (the witness) had been informed by the said Arthur."† As to Dr. Bodkin, it is added that he was about fifty years of age, of a noble family, and remarkable for the morality and sanctity of his life, being also well versed in theology and canon law, to which he had applied himself in the university of Oxford; he was, moreover, a stern defender of orthodoxy, and an enemy of the heretics, and more through fear than depravity of intention, contracted the guilt of schism. The city itself, it is added, was wholly free from all danger or suspicion of heresy.‡ This evidence of Rev. Peter Wall was

* He was consecrated bishop of Kilmacduagh, at Marseilles, November 4, 1534. He was subsequently appointed archbishop of Tuam, by the English monarch, on the 13th of February, 1537, but was not recognized by Rome. Notwithstanding his schismatical appointment, he remained devoted to the Catholic faith. On his submission to the Holy See, he was allowed by cardinal Pole to continue in the administration of the temporalities of the see of Tuam, with the right of succession on the demise of Dr. O'Frighi.

† This Arthur was, indeed, for many years after, true archbishop of Tuam, as we learn from a letter of David Wolf, 12th October, 1561: he was a canon of Raphoe, and appointed to Tuam in 1538.—(*Acta Consistorialia in Archiv. Vatic.*)

‡ There is a note added to the document which would impair a little the favorable testimony of this witness, in regard of Dr. Bodkin: "*Ipse (Petrus Wall) fuit familiaris dicti Christophori et ab eo obtinuit archidiaconatum Eccles. Duacensis.*" His evidence, however, is fully corroborated in every par-

corroborated by the testimony of Donald Doign, a Tuam priest, and of Maurice Macrai, a priest of Kilmacduagh.

The third document presents a similar investigation, held on the 14th of October the same year, regarding the diocese of Anaghduagh (Anachduanen.), which was supposed to be united to the metropolitan see of Tuam. We glean from it that the city of Anaghduagh was small, and unfortified,—being situated at the distance of four or five miles from the city of Tuam; there was a small cathedral church in it, dedicated under the invocation of St. Brandan. This church had still a dean and archdeacon, and some canons, who, however, did not reside there; in fact, it was altogether abandoned, and only one Mass was celebrated in it on the days of obligation: “there is a belfry attached to it, and a cemetery; it has only one chalice and one vestment; the diocese itself is small, and situated in a dangerous and uncivilized country.”

That these districts, which were as yet almost wholly exempt from English rule, should be styled *barbarian* by English authority, is intelligible enough; but the fact that the cathedral churches, even in those remote dioceses, had been plundered and had fallen into decay, sufficiently attests with what fury the agents of the English court had assailed, throughout the whole kingdom, the time-honoured monuments of the faith of our fathers. We have a further confirmation of their vandalic fury in the commission which was issued on the 3rd of December, 1556, addressed to the archbishop of Dublin, with the deans of Christ's Church and St. Patrick's, and some others who were authorized “to report on all lands and tenements, all sacred plate, bells, and other utensils, as well as all sums of money which had lately belonged to the churches or chapels of the diocese of Dublin; and to inquire into the present state of such churches, and if ruinous or in decay, to investigate by whose fault they had become so.”

The Catholic faith was now fully restored, not only in its

ticular by the letter of David Wolf already referred to, with the exception of the motive which is said to have impelled Dr. Bodkin to throw himself into the arms of the schismatical party. From Wolf's letter it is clear, that Dr. Bodkin was not merely impelled by fear to *accept*, but much rather impelled by ambition to *solicit*, from Henry that dignity which had been refused by the Holy See.

sacred ritual, but also in its civil power and influence, throughout the whole extent of the kingdom: nevertheless, we do not meet with one single case of persecution against those who professed the Protestant tenets. So well known, indeed, were the sentiments of toleration of the Irish Catholics, that when many Protestant families of England found themselves subjected to local disabilities or persecution, they fled for refuge to Dublin and other parts of Ireland, and continued there to pursue unmolested the practices of their peculiar creeds. Dr. Leland records that, "the assertors of the reformation who had not fled from this kingdom, were, by the lenity of the Irish government, suffered to sink into obscurity and neglect. . . . Several English families, friends to the reformation, fled into Ireland, and there enjoyed their opinions and worship in privacy, without notice or molestation."* Taylor, too, confesses that "the restoration of the old religion was effected without violence; no persecution of the Protestants was attempted, and several of the English . . . found a safe retreat among the Catholics of Ireland. It is but justice to this maligned body to add, that on three occasions of their obtaining the upper hand, they never injured a single person in life or limb for professing a religion different from their own, . . . as they showed, in the reign of Mary—in the wars from 1641 to 1648—and during the brief triumph of James II."† Mr. William Parnell gratefully acknowledges, in like manner, that "though the religious feelings of the Irish Catholics, and their feelings as men, had been treated with very little ceremony during the two preceding reigns, they made a wise and moderate use of their ascendancy. They entertained no resentment for the past; they laid no plans for future domination. . . . Such was the general spirit of toleration, that many English families, friends to the reformation, took refuge in Ireland, and there enjoyed their opinions and worship without molestation."‡ The editor of the *Liber Munerum Hiberniæ*, also writes of Mary's reign: "There was no persecution of the Protestants in Ireland by fire or torture, in this reign. In truth, the reformation not having been sown

* Hist. of Ireland, book 3rd., ch. viii.

† Hist. of the Civil Wars in Ireland, vol. i., page 169.

‡ Historical Apology, page 35, seq.

in Ireland, there was no occasion to water it by the blood of martyrs: insomuch, that several English families, friends to the reformation, withdrew into Ireland as into a secure asylum.*

These first years of Dr. Curwin's episcopate were a period of comparative peace and tranquillity. But though the government had restored the Catholic religion, yet in some districts, the local authorities that remained unchanged, continued their petty vexations and persecutions against the Catholic clergy. As regards Dr. Curwin himself, would to heaven, that a veil could be drawn to close his history with the death of queen Mary! for his career during her reign had been unsullied by those vices that marked his subsequent years, and made him an object of reproach and shame, even to the Protestant sectaries whose communion he embraced.

3.—*Apostacy of Dr. Curwin and his subsequent Career.*

On the 17th of November, 1558, queen Mary died, and it was soon necessary for our archbishop to choose between the smiles of her successor, and the poverty and persecutions to which the Catholics were subjected. Dr. Curwin did not long deliberate, and true to his earlier courtier habits, resolved without delay to accommodate his conscience and conduct so as to suit the fancy of Elizabeth. His history as archbishop of Dublin is thus brought to a close; but the documents connected with his subsequent career, record some particulars which merit the reader's attention, and illustrate the condition of the Irish Church at this period.

The constancy of the dean of his cathedral church presents a striking contrast with the base apostacy of the archbishop.

* Lib. Munerum vol. i. part i. page 38. It reflects but little credit on Dr. Mant that though he was obliged to confess that "several English Protestants fled into Ireland from Cheshire, and bringing with them their families, goods, and chattels, lived in Dublin, and became citizens of that city;" yet he has not the fairness to acknowledge the forbearance of the Irish Catholics, and endeavours to explain the peace and quiet which was enjoyed by the Protestants, by their own "wisdom and caution" in concealing their religion. But if such was their *wisdom and caution*, why, we may ask, did they not remain at home with their goods and chattels in Cheshire?

Thomas Leverous had been appointed dean of St. Patrick's, Dublin, in 1554, and by special privilege continued to hold that dignity even after his consecration as bishop of Kildare.* When the earl of Kildare and his five uncles were treacherously seized on in 1535, and sent to England to be soon after led to the scaffold, the only hope of the Geraldine family, the youthful Gerald, half-brother to the earl, was saved by his faithful tutor, Dr. Leverous. The youth was lying ill at Donore, in the county of Kildare, but "his nurse immediately committed him to the care of his tutor, Thomas Leverous, a priest and foster-brother of his father, who carefully conveyed him in a large basket into Offaly, to his sister, lady Mary O'Connor. There he remained until he had perfectly recovered, when he was removed first to O'Dun's country, and after three months, to Thomond, where he was under the care of his cousin, James Delahoide, eldest son of Walter Delahoide of Moyglare."† During the five years that Gerald continued in Ireland, travelling from district to district, and ever varying his disguise, Leverous was with him, his faithful guardian and preceptor. The lord deputy and the English agents employed every art and stratagem, and offered every inducement that could allure the Irish chieftains to surrender or betray the wished-for prize; but all were "so affectionate to the Geraldines"‡ that not one traitor was found in the Irish ranks. Dr. Leverous was also mainly instrumental in organizing that confederacy of the Irish chieftains which, in 1537 and 1540, well nigh brought to ruin the power of king Henry in Ireland. The despatches of that time declare, that "never was such a combination seen in Ireland,"§ and whilst the English commanders pourtray their own alarms and their treacherous designs, they also record the interesting fact, that the Irish confederates had appealed to arms to defend "the supremacy of the pope and the Geraldines."|| About the middle of March, 1540, the young Geraldine, "dressed in a saffron-colored shirt, and bare-

* He was nominated by the crown to that vacant see on the 1st of March, 1555, and was confirmed by the Holy See on 3rd August, the same year.

† See "The Earls of Kildare and their Ancestors, from 1057 to 1773," by the marquis of Kildare. Second edition. Dublin, 1858, pag. 170.

‡ St. Pap., vol. iii., pag. 148.

§ State Pap. vol. iii., pag. 145.

|| Ibid. pag. 148.

headed, like one of the wild Irish,"* and accompanied only by Leverous and two attendants, set sail from Donegal Bay, and "safely arrived at St. Malo, where he was hospitably received by the governor, Mons. de Chateaubriand."† So great was the reverence and affection of the young earl for his faithful tutor, that at the slightest word of rebuke, he used to tremble through fear of displeasing him.‡ The intrigues of the English king soon obliged the young Geraldine to fly from France, and subsequently too from Flanders, and take refuge in Rome, where "he was treated with the greatest affection;"§ and sharer of all his perils and sufferings, was the worthy provost of Kildare. In Rome, Dr. Leverous became acquainted with cardinal Pole, and pursued his studies there from 1543 till 1548, when he returned again to England, still the guardian and guide of the Geraldine.

In 1551 we meet with a characteristic letter of the lord deputy, sir James Crofts, in which that Protestant nobleman writes to the English court, suggesting the appointment of Leverous to either of the vacant sees of Cashel or Ossory, declaring that "for learning, discretion, and (in outward appearance) for good living, he is the meetest man in this realm, and best able to preach both in the English and the Irish tongue." And he adds: "for as much as he was thought an offender for conveying the lord Garrett out of the realm, and notwithstanding since had his pardon, I dare not become a suitor for him, although, as I have said, I know no man so meet; I heard him preach such a sermon as, in my simple opinion, I did not hear in many years."|| Dr. Leverous, however, was not the flexible character required by the English courtiers; and it was only in 1555, on the expulsion of the Protestant bishop from Kildare, that he was advanced to his native¶ diocese. When on the accession.

* Despatch of one of the English continental spies from Rennes, 22nd May 1540: in St. Pap., vol. iii. pag. 211.

† "The Earls of Kild.," pag. 182.

‡ St. Pap. vol. iii., pag. 211, and another letter from Rouen to Henry VIII., on 6th Sept., 1541, *ibid.* pag. 281.

§ "Earls of Kild.," pag. 193. For many further particulars regarding the young earl and Dr. Leverous, see Stanihurst, "Hist. Anglicana," vol. i., page 245, seq.

|| Shirley's "Original Letters," etc., pag. 61-2.

¶ The nomination of Dr. Leverous received the sanction of the Holy See on the 3rd of August, 1555; the bull of his appointment, however, did not reach

of Elizabeth he was summoned to take the oath of allegiance, both spiritual and temporal, he heroically refused to comply with the injunctions of the lord deputy, and avowed his determination to risk every earthly prospect, sooner than renounce his faith. His interview with the deputy is thus described by Mr. Mason, in his history of St. Patrick's Cathedral:—The lord deputy asked him why he refused to take an oath which had already been taken by so many illustrious men. The bishop made answer, that all ecclesiastical jurisdiction was derived from Christ: and since the divine founder of the Church did not deem it fit to confer ecclesiastical authority even on the most privileged of women, His own blessed Mother, how could it be believed that supremacy and the primacy of ecclesiastical authority should, in future ages, be delegated to anyone of that sex? He added, that according to the command of the apostle, no woman should presume to speak authoritatively in the Church, much less should she preside and rule there; and to confirm this opinion, he adduced authorities from St. Chrysostom and Tertullian, and other early writers. The deputy, abandoning this line of argument, then represented to him that if he refused to comply, he must be deprived of all his revenues; to which the worthy bishop replied, in the words of the sacred text: "What shall it profit a man to gain the whole world, if he lose his own soul?"*

The threat was soon put in execution; and whilst government honours were heaped on those worthless men who sacrificed their consciences to the whims of Elizabeth, Dr. Leverous "was dispossessed of his temporalities, and compelled to fly the country. He sojourned some time in† or near Limerick, where he taught school. He afterwards returned, visited his destitute flock, and in a little time closed a most pious and apostolic life, in an

Ireland till the 19th of December, through the illness of the person to whom it was entrusted. "In the Auditor-General's office (says Mason) there is a petition of Dr. Leverous praying to be allowed the main profits of his see from the date of the pope's bull—which profits are stated to be forty-four pounds per annum. His petition was granted, as appears by the order, which is dated the 15th of February."—Hist. of St. Patrick's, pag. 162.

* See *Analecta*, by Dr. Roothé of Ossory, and other authorities in Mason's Hist. loc. cit.

† His first school was at Adare, and one of his ushers in that hallowed locality was Richard Creagh, who in a few years was promoted to the archbishopric of Armagh.—Mason, "Hist. of St. Patrick's," page 160, seq.

obscure hut at Naas.* We are further informed by Ware, that he died about the year 1577, in the eightieth year of his age, and was buried at Naas, in the parish church of St. David.

One of the chief instructions given to the lord deputy, on being sent into Ireland, was, "to set up the worship of God as it was in England."† To carry this design into execution, a parliament was convened in January, 1560, and the following statutes were published, to regulate the future government and worship of the Established Church in Ireland. The first act declares "restored to the crown the ancient jurisdiction over the state, ecclesiastical and spiritual."‡ The oath of supremacy was ordered to be taken by all ecclesiastical persons, officers, and ministers; and forfeiture of office was the penalty for refusing it. To maintain or defend foreign jurisdiction, was pronounced an offence for which an ecclesiastic should, the first time, lose all his benefices; the second time, incur the penalty of præmunire, and the third time, be adjudged to suffer the penalties of high treason.

Another statute decreed "the uniformity of common prayer and service in the church and in the administration of the sacraments." In the first year of Edward VI. the Book of Common Prayer had been introduced into Ireland, and it remained unchanged during the remainder of his reign, although in England it was subjected to many variations. It was now introduced again, not according to its former Irish model, but according to its latest English fashion, *with certain further alterations and additions*, and thus remodelled, it was ordered to be used in all the cathedral and parish churches of the kingdom. All ministers "who should refuse to use it, or should use any other form, or speak or preach in derogation of it," were mulcted for the first offence, with the forfeiture of a year's profit of benefice and six months' imprisonment; for the second offence, with imprisonment for one year and deprivation; and for the third offence, with imprisonment for life. This same statute commanded "all persons to resort to the parish churches on all Sundays and Holidays, and there to abide orderly during the service,

* These words are taken from a MS. memorandum written by Right Rev. Dr. Doyle, bp. of K. and L., and kindly communicated by his worthy successor the present bishop of that see.

† Cox. i. 313.

‡ 2 Elizab. chap. i.

on pain of the censures of the Church, and twelve-pence, to be levied by the churchwardens, for the use of the poor." As, however, not one in a thousand, even within the pale, could appreciate the service of the "common prayer," it was deemed necessary to derogate from what the reformers had more than once proclaimed to be required by God's law, and *considering the peculiar circumstances of Ireland*, it was declared lawful not to celebrate in the vulgar tongue, but "to say and use the matins, even-song, celebration of the Lord's supper, and administration of each of the sacraments, and all their common and open prayer, in the Latin language."* This device of the government theologians had, in part, its desired effect; for many of the Irish Catholics, seeing the Latin liturgy yet preserved, which was everywhere regarded as a sure sign of the Catholic faith, continued for awhile to frequent the parish churches, reciting their rosaries and performing their usual Catholic devotions. The sheep's clothing, however, could not long conceal the iniquitous designs of the new ministers; and when the mistake was discovered, the churches were left desolate, and the faithful people sought in the glens and mountain caverns their own true pastors, to receive from them the sacraments of life.

As to Dr. Curwin, one of his first cares after bowing to the decrees of Elizabeth, was to remove the statues and other ornaments with which he himself had formerly adorned the cathedral and parochial churches. Even the beautiful fresco-paintings were effaced; and amongst the MSS. of Marsh's library we find a record, that "orders were sent to newly paint the walls of St. Patrick's, and instead of pictures, to place passages of Scripture thereon."† Like instructions were sent to the other churches, and in particular the dean of Christ's Church was commanded "to remove all popish relics and images, and to paint and whiten it anew, effacing from the walls all paintings and other such remains of popery;" orders which were without delay carried into execution.‡

In 1564 Dr. Curwin actively opposed a project for converting

* Act of Parliament, 2nd Eliz., c. ii.; Leland's History of Ireland, ii. 225; Mant, i. 260.

† See Mant, i. 253.

‡ Ibid. p. 265.

the church of St. Patrick into a university; assigning for such opposition, the following characteristic reasons: 1. "The notion of the change cometh from certain greedy persons, who have repaired out of this realm to the court, who look more for their own gain than any profit of the country, thinking that at the dissolving thereof, they may have the prebends to farm at a low price, as divers of them have already boasted there." 2. "In this realm of Ireland, a university will be of small profit; for here there are no promotions to be bestowed upon clerks that are learned, which, however, would be a matter of necessity." 3. "An university here will be unprofitable; for the Irish enemy, under colour of study, would send their friends hither, who would learn the secrets of the country, and advertise them thereof, so that the Irish rebels should by them know the secrets of the English pale." 4. "The prebends are parish churches, having cure of souls, and therefore have to be bestowed on elderly men, and not on young scholars: the whole profit of them standeth in tithes, without any temporal land, which at present, as corn is extremely dear, are worth something; but if the price of corn shall fall, they would be of too small a value to help any number of scholars." 5. "Moreover, the change of the church would be a destruction to the archbishop here, who hath not one benefice within the English pale to bestow upon learned men, but only the prebends of St. Patrick's, which are only twenty-three in number; so that if they be altered, he shall not be able to have one learned man to preach God's word in his diocese."*

To Protestant writers of the present day, one of the most important events of Dr. Curwin's career was the consecration of Adam Loftus, who in 1562 was appointed by her majesty archbishop of Armagh. This act derives its importance from the validity which it seems to impart to the Protestant ordinations of the Irish Church; and hence it is chosen by them as the link which preserved apostolical succession in the Protestant hierarchy of this kingdom.† It would be foreign to these pages to examine

* The original letter of Curwin is given in Shirley's "Collection," etc., pp. 151-153.

† See Mant, loc. cit. 269, 270; Harris's Ware, p. 94.

whether *valid ordination* would of itself suffice to preserve unbroken the apostolical succession: it certainly did not suffice to preserve such apostolical succession in the churches of Apollinaris and Nestorius. There is, however, something altogether mysterious about the election of Dr. Loftus to the see of Armagh. His early ordination as priest is subject to grave doubts. Whilst yet at Cambridge, it was the comeliness of his person and his graceful address, that won for him the favour of Elizabeth; and he was only in his twenty-eighth year, when he was appointed by her to the see of Armagh.* He was at first nominated by her majesty for that see in November, 1561, but for some secret cause, she again suspended that nomination.† At the urgent solicitation of the earl of Sussex, she renewed her nomination in the following year, and sent an order to the chapter of Armagh to proceed to his election. There is preserved, however, a letter of the lord deputy and council of Ireland to queen Elizabeth, on September 2nd, 1562, in which they complain that the chapter could by no means be assembled; they were all adherents of Shane O'Neil, and neither argument nor threat could induce them to proceed to the election of the queen's nominee.‡ The remedy, however, was in the hands of her majesty, and consequently we find him consecrated by virtue of her sole authority on 2nd of March, 1563. There is no record of his earlier ordination: the fact of his being dean of St. Patrick's during Elizabeth's reign, does not imply any such ordination;§

* Harris's Ware, loc. cit.

† Shirley's Orig. Lett., pp. 91-100.

‡ Shirley's "Orig. Lett.," pag. 119, 121. Perhaps the true reason why the canons refused to assemble for the election of an archbishop was, that the see was *not vacant*, as an archbishop had already been canonically appointed by the Holy See.

§ We are informed by Mason (see also Shirley, pag. 299), in his Hist. of St. Patrick's (pag. 170), that, in 1568, Robert Weston, though *no ecclesiastic*, yet was dean of St. Patrick's; and at the same time another of the prebendaries was a layman. These facts remained unnoticed till an investigation was held in that year, when both acknowledged they were laymen, but pleaded that they had received a dispensation from the archbishop of Canterbury. They were both allowed to continue in their prebends. This promotion to the episcopate, without previous ordination, may seem strange at the present day. However, it was more a matter of course in the reign of Elizabeth. Thus, in the genealogical account of the O'Donnellans, published by O'Donovan in I.A.S., 1843, it is said of Dr. Nehemias O'Donnellan, who was consecrated Protestant archbishop of Tuam on May 18th, 1595, "*though he never was in holy orders, he was called archbishop of Tuam.*"—Ibid. pag. 171. The fact seems to be, that many of those who were thus appointed to the episcopate,

and the well-known sentiments that then swayed the court and the Protestant bishops of England, must make the rational inquirer hesitate, before he recognizes Dr. Loftus as a person capable of receiving the true episcopal consecration.*

The history of the removal of Dr. Curwin to the see of Oxford, and the causes which led to it, throw some light on the condition of the Established Church in Ireland at this period. Strype, in his life of archbishop Parker, tells us that he met with a letter written about 1562, by Adam Loftus (who a little while before had been appointed to the see of Armagh) and addressed to the archbishop of Canterbury, wherein Dr. Loftus "hinted how his grace of Canterbury had promised to aid him in all church causes of Ireland, especially for removing the archbishop of Dublin;" and Strype adds, that Dr. Curwin "was, as described by the archbishop of Armagh, a known enemy, and labouring under open crimes, which although he shamed not to do, I am (said that archbishop) almost ashamed to mention."† From this passage Dr. Mant justly concludes that "archbishop Curwin's character suffered under some heavy moral imputations, as we have already seen his unsteadiness as to religion."‡

Indeed these accusations against Dr. Curwin were more than once repeated. As early as November 2nd, 1560, he himself petitioned to be translated to an English see,§ setting forth as his claim, that "no man of his coat" had been more devoted to

looked on their appointment as a mere money-making speculation, and a mere concern of civil government. Thus we read in Lynch's MS. History of the Irish Church, when speaking of the famous bishop of Achonry, Dr. Eugene O'Hart: "Id etiam commodi ex episcopatibus Achadensi et Alladensi, Eugenio O'Connor, ab Elizabetha regina collatis hausit ut ab illa sede sua minime motus fuerit, ut pote cui arcto amicitiae nexu ante religionis mutationem devinctus fuerat, sed 180 marcarum censu veteri sodali quotannis persoluto quietem sibi et functiones episcopales intra suæ dioceseos fines obeundi potestatem comparavit: et alter ille Eugenius ideo tantum a fide descivit ut se fluxis et caducis divitiis et voluptatibus expleret."

* To theologians, of course, one great reason for rejecting the validity of the Protestant ordinations, even in Ireland, is the insufficiency of the form used in the Protestant ritual. For the subject viewed in this light, we refer the reader to the essays of Dr. Lingard, Kenrick, Perrone, and others. Dr. Mant evidently betrays some anxiety on the question, when he writes that the Protestant succession of bishops through Dr. Loftus is unquestioned and unquestionable, and protected against all exceptions, even from the Papists themselves.—Hist. of the Church of Irel. London, 1840, vol. i., pag. 270.

† Strype's Life of Parker, i. 221.

‡ Mant. loc. cit., pag. 282.

§ Shirley, loc. cit., pag. 94.

the crown, whether in England or in Ireland. This translation, however, was not accorded to him, and we next meet with a letter in her majesty's name (Oct. 15, 1563) proposing to him to resign his archbishopric and chancellorship, and offering him as compensation £200 per annum for the remainder of his life.* To this proposal Dr. Curwin replied on the 3rd of April following, and while he hints that her majesty, "upon sinister information, hath conceived some dislike" for himself and his doings,† he renews his suit for an English bishopric, "where, I trust," he adds, "I should recover better health than I have had in this realm;" and, in fine, he prays that at least such benefices would be granted to him as would equal his revenue in Dublin, and thus enable him to keep his *old servants*, who were *Englishmen*, and to continue the hospitality which he had ever kept *since his ecclesiastical promotion*, and which he *would be loath to give over in his latter days*.‡ Not obtaining these favours, he says, "the evil-disposed would have cause to conceive or report that for my evil deserts or lack of due service I was thought worthy to lose these offices; and especially the archbishopric, the leaving whereof, and not receiving another, shall engender slander against me, that I was deprived of it." No change, however, was made for the moment, and it was only on the 28th of March, 1566, that his translation to Oxford was announced to the lord deputy, which was at length carried into effect in the following year. The letter which Dr. Curwin on this occasion addressed to the chief secretary in England is, indeed, a characteristic one: he asks, as a further favor, that he might leave Dublin before the following winter, and "in such time as he might provide fire for the winter and hay for his horses," and he suggests that his successor should be appointed without delay, "for, if the see stand vacant, much of the lands will be pilfered away by Irishmen, and the houses spoiled."§

A little before this translation was confirmed by the crown, Dr. Brady gave a rather low character of the archbishop, praying for his recall, as being *an old unprofitable workman*;||

* Shirley, loc. cit. pag. 124-5.

† Ibid. pag. 144.

‡ Loc. cit. p. 147.

§ Shirley, loc. cit. p. 248-9: from a letter of the lord deputy (Ibid. p. 250) we learn that Dr. Curwin made a further petition to be allowed the preceding *half-year's rent of Oxford*.

|| Ibid. pag. 201, letter of June 23, 1565.

and elsewhere he had styled him *a disguised dissembler*, numbering him amongst *the dumb dogs who neither teach nor feed any save themselves*. Even Dr. Loftus was not less severe, and besides the letter already cited in the extract from Strype, he again wrote on October 8th, 1565, urging Dr. Curwin's removal, as being unfit and unwilling *to further any business* of the new reformation;* and when this removal was delayed, he again wrote on October 5th, 1566: "I beseech your honor, for Jesus Christ's sake, that my suit in regard of the church of Dublin may be so furthered, that it may be finished with the expedition which the cause requireth: it is much that I desire, and yet no more than the case demands; for when he (Dr. Curwin) neither does good in preaching nor reforming his diocese himself,—when he placeth in the sufficient livings for able preachers, those that he never saw and never come there, open enemies, and such as for want of learning are never able, even if they had the will, to do the church any good,—when in open judgment (loath I am to say it, and I say it only constrainedly), when, I say, in open judgment, he will swear terribly, and that not once or twice, I beseech your honor, is it not time, and more than time, that such a one be removed? and yet, I spare him, I assure your honor, that you may understand how far I am from maligning him." (Ibid. pag. 275).

4.—*The Irish remain devoted to the Catholic Faith.*

It has been often asserted that the act of parliament to which we have already referred, implies an official renunciation of the authority of the Holy See by the representatives of the Irish nation. Such a statement, however, is wholly irreconcilable with the true facts of the case,† and the enactments of that parliament can in nowise be identified with the wishes of Ireland. The official list of the members summoned to parliament in 1559-60, has been recently published by the Irish Archaeological Society.‡ More than two-thirds of the upper house are

* Ibid. pag. 226.

† See an able article on this subject in "Rambler," Jan. 1853, entitled "A chapter in the History of the Ref. of Ireland," from the pen of my lamented friend, Dr. Kelly, Prof. of Ec. Hist., Maynooth.

‡ "Tracts relating to Ireland," vol. ii., pag., 135.

known to have continued for many years attached to the Catholic faith;* and amongst them were many who endured severe persecutions on account of their devotedness to that sacred cause. The lower house consisted of comparatively few members. No county in Ulster was allowed a representative, and only one of its borough-towns, viz., Carrickfergus, had the privilege of a voice in parliament. From all Connaught there was likewise no county member, and only two boroughs, viz., Galway and Athenry, were represented in it. From Munster there were but twenty members, whilst from a portion of Leinster the remaining fifty members were summoned to parliament. In a word, only those districts were allowed a representative, which were most subject to government control; and the decision of a parliament thus constituted was surely not the voice of the Irish nation.

Though the members of such a parliament would naturally be supposed to be pliant to the wishes of Elizabeth, yet the majority made no secret of their resolution to refuse their sanction to the English penal code. This was a moment of perilous anxiety for the lord deputy. He had received positive instructions from her majesty to have these laws passed in parliament,† and nothing remained to him but to have recourse to stratagem to ensure the approving smiles of the imperious monarch.

“The blame of these outrages on religion (writes the learned author of *Cambrensis Eversus*) must not be charged against all the members elected to serve in that parliament. The deputy is recorded to have employed violence, and the speaker

* The editor of *The Life and Times of Sir P. Carew*, 1857, pag. lxxxviii., acknowledges that “most of the temporal lords were firmly attached to the Romish communion.” He adds, however, the bishops were not so zealous or steadfast in their faith: they had accepted every phase of religion which had been presented to them, and with the exception of two, Meath and Kildare, they made no difficulty on the present occasion.” This latter statement is wholly inconsistent (1.), with what the same writer adds (pag. lxxxix.): “It was found impossible to enforce the new laws: the clergy refused to conform, abandoned their cures, and none could be found to supply their places;” (2.) with the report of the government commission of 1564, which describes the bishops as being, with the exception of two, all opposed to the new tenets—Shirley, pag. 140; see also other documents in preface.

† Lib. Munerum Hib. vol. i., part 4th, page 113, letter of Eliz. 18th Oct., 1559.

treachery. Finding that there was a very thin attendance of members on a certain day* and that the benches were almost untenanted, except by a few who were already resolved to abolish the old creed, he delivered an elaborate and specious harangue for the abrogation of the Catholic faith, and is said to have carried with him the votes of the house. I have been informed that it was previously announced in the house that parliament would not sit on that very day ; but, in the mean time, a private summons was sent to those who were well known to be favourable to the new creed."†

Another writer, father George Dillon, who, in 1650, full of years, died a martyr of charity while assisting those stricken with the plague in Waterford, adds some further particulars: " In 1560, (he says) James Stanihurst, lord of Corduff, who was speaker of the lower house of parliament, by sending private summons to some, without any intimation to the more respectable Irish, succeeded in carrying the penal law by surprise. . . . As soon as the matter was discovered, in the next full meeting of parliament there was a general protest against the fraud, injustice, and deliberate treachery of the proceeding. But the lord deputy and others having solemnly sworn that the law would never be carried into execution, the remonstrants were caught in the dexterous snare, and consented that the enactment should remain on the statute-book."‡ The learned bishop of Ossory, Dr. Roothe, also attests these facts; and he further informs us that the delegates of the Irish parliament to king James in 1613, declared to the English monarch that the penal

* From the official lists in Tracts, &c., published by R. I. Academy, as also *Coz and Liber Mun. Hib.*, we learn that the parliament was prorogued from 11th January to 1st February, 1560; as the 1st February was the Feast-day of St. Brigid, the patroness of Ireland, we can easily understand how the orthodox members might have absented themselves, and how it could have been hinted to them that no public business would be transacted on that day.

† Vol. iii., page 19. Dr. Roothe in his *Analecta*, page 387, corroborates this statement; and he also says of the same speaker of the parliament: "His enormous wealth passed out of his family, with his grandson, who not only squandered away the wages of his grandfather's guilt, but ran through the old patrimonial inheritance."

‡ "*Rationes et Motiva*," etc., page 87; *Camb. Evers.*, loc. cit. page 21-3. Curry, in his "*Historical Review*," book 2nd, chap. iii. remarks that these penal acts "were well known to have been imposed upon the nation by force or fraud, though under the plausible appearance of parliamentary sanction."

statutes of 1560 were passed in the fraudulent manner we have described.

The government, however, soon resolved that these enactments should not remain without effect: and we find commissioners to inquire into the state of the Irish church appointed for the county of Westmeath in May, 1561; for the province of Armagh, including Meath, in December the same year, and for the whole kingdom in October, 1564.* From a report made to the privy council by two of the head commissioners in 1564,† we learn what little progress had been made in the work of reformation: they state that so devoted were the people to the old religion, that scarcely could they be induced even to listen to the new tenets; they say, however, that they must not be despaired of, as the inhabitants were naturally inclined to observe the laws, whilst the judges and lawyers were disposed to execute the enactments made in regard of religion; yet they conclude, *we thought good that they meddle not with the simple multitude for the present, but with one or two boasting mass-men (priests) in every shire.*‡

In the "instructions" sent by the government to the lord deputy (July 4th, 1565) the country is represented as unreformed, and as yet in its primitive, *barbarous, and savage* state: *i.e.*, refusing to accept the laws and adopt the usages which were established in 1560.§

One of these enactments commanded that the oath of supremacy should be taken by all who were assumed to the various civil offices throughout the kingdom. So far, however, were the Irish cities and towns from complying with this injunction, that throughout the whole of Elizabeth's reign they retained the old Catholic oath, which, indeed, was a full profession of Catholic faith and condemnatory of all heresies and schisms. It is thus Peter Lombard writes in 1601: "The cities and towns, and other civic communities never consented either to receive that oath, or to require it from those who were elected to the magistracy and other offices. Nay, as regards religion, no other oath

* "Liber Mun. Hib." vol. i. part. 2nd, pp. 181-2.

† Published by Shirley in "Orig. Lett." p. 130.

‡ Ibid, p. 140.

§ Shirley, loc. cit. 206-213.

is ever taken in these towns but the oath of the olden Catholic times, in rejection and detestation of all heresies and heretics; so that it is more opposed to the English monarchs and their religion than in any way favorable to them.* So determined indeed was the opposition made by the Irish boroughs to the oath of supremacy, that when some over-zealous ministers of the crown sought to enforce it in Cork and other places, they were rebuked by the court for their indiscretion.†

Another of the so-called parliamentary enactments prescribed, under penalty of fine, attendance at the Protestant service.‡ As we have already remarked, such attendance was for the great mass of the population wholly impracticable. The Protestant ritual prescribed the service in the vulgar tongue; and whilst even the Bible§ and Book of Common Prayer were not as yet translated into the Irish language, the English tongue was wholly unintelligible to the people, except in some districts of Louth, Dublin, Meath, and Kildare.¶ A concession was, however, made

* De Regno Hib. (MS) chap. 20.—“Ad hæc, quamvis prophanum de quo paulo antea iuramentum de profitenda et credenda suprema dictorum regum auctoritate, cum in temporalibus tum in spiritualibus sic præscriptum ac præceptum esset ab eorundem conciliis, tanquam quod deberet exigi ab omnibus qui in Hibernia ad officia publica assumerentur; tamen civitates hic, oppida, aliaque communitates iuramentum istud suscipere nunquam voluerunt, nec ab iis præstari quos ad magistratum aliaque officia eligunt et assumunt. Imo quoad religionis causam non aliud in iis præstatur iuramentum quam olim Catholico tempore exigi solebat in abnegationem et detestationem hæreseos et hæreticorum omnium ac proinde quod revera iisdem regibus, eorumque religioni adversatur potius quam ullo modo favet.”—(Pet. Lomb. De Reg. Hib. cap. 20.)

† See an instance in Camb. Evers, vol 1, pag. 32, note. Other instances occur in Hib. Pacata.

‡ Lord Clare, in his famous speech on the union, justly styles the enforcing of the new liturgy a *solecism in legislation*, and adds: “In the body of the act, by which *the use of the English liturgy and a strict conformity to it* was enjoined under severe penalties, a clause is introduced, reciting that English ministers could not be found to serve in Irish churches; that the Irish people did not understand the English language; that the church-service could not be celebrated in Irish. And what is the remedy? If the minister of the Gospel cannot speak English, he may celebrate the church-service in the Latin tongue.”

§ The first Prot. Bible in Irish was printed in 1603.

¶ Even in Kildare, however, but little progress had been as yet made in the English language, if we can credit the testimony of Dr. Craik, the Protestant bishop of that see. This prelate was appointed by Elizabeth in August, 1560, and as Shirley remarks, was “chiefly remarkable for the very imprudent exchanges which he made of the see-lands.” (Orig. Letters, p. 95.) Ware also writes that he reduced “the very ancient see of Kildare to a shameful poverty.” (Harris's Ware's Bishops, p. 391.) And Harris adds, that in the short time of his episcopate “he did more mischief to his see, than his suc-

in the sequel to the act, permitting the service to be continued in Latin wheresoever the English language was not understood; and some of the uninstructed faithful being entrapped by this artifice, continued for awhile to frequent the parochial churches, imagining that no deviation had been made from the ancient liturgy. Some, even of the most ignorant (writes Peter Lombard) "guided by the unction of the Holy Ghost more than by any other motive, withdrew themselves at once from this Protestant service. But very many continued to flock thither as usual in the Catholic times, in such a manner, however, that they used no religious symbols, save those which proclaimed their Catholic faith, bringing with them, and using in the churches, the crucifix, with the image of our Saviour, the prayers and beads of the Blessed Virgin, the litanies and pictures

cessors have been ever able to repair." (Ibid.) As early as April, 1561, he thus wrote to lord Robert Dudley: "As you were the instrument of this my continual and daily torment (I mean of my preferment unto a bishopric in such place in Ireland, where neither I can preach unto the people, nor the people understand me), I pray that you will be the like instrument unto the queen's majesty, that I may be exonerated and unburdened of the same; for there is not a preacher to assist me in setting forth of God's word." (Shirley Orig. Letts. pp. 95-6.) It is indeed a remarkable fact, how little root the English language had taken, even within the districts of the pale. As early as 1367, in the famous statute of Kilkenny, the Irish language was interdicted to all "the English, or Irish living among the English," under the penalty of forfeiture of "lands and tenements" (Tracts, etc., Royal Irish Acad., vol. ii. part 2nd, p. 13); and this severe enactment was renewed in each successive parliament till 1495, when it was at length repealed. Under Henry VIII. it was again re-enacted in 1537, but in vain; for the Celtic tongue, year by year, irresistibly encroached upon the English quarters, till at length, as Stanihurst writes in 1575, it was *free denized in the English pale. and took such deep root, that the body which was before whole and sound, became by little and little in a manner wholly putrified.* (Description of Ireland, p. 4.) In 1537 it had also been enacted that no benefice should be given to a person that spoke Irish only, until proclamation was made for four days in the nearest market town for an English-speaking candidate; nevertheless, Sydney reported in 1576, that out of the one hundred-and-two vicars of the diocese of Meath, there were only eighteen that spoke English. The author of *Cambrensis Eversus* (i. 191) writes in 1660 that the Irish language is that "which all of us to this day drink in on our mother's breasts. Except the inhabitants of Dublin, Drogheda, and Wexford, and their immediate vicinities, the only knowledge we have of English is what we learn in schools." From this it would appear that Wexford was an exceptional town; however, Stanihurst tells us that at his time (1575) the Wexfordians, who formerly spoke no Irish, "had so acquainted themselves with the Irish language, that they have made a mingle-mangle, or gallimanfrie, of both the languages;" and he adds, that an English commissioner who was sent over to Wexford, congratulated himself on his rapid progress in the Irish, because he was able to understand odd words and sentences of the Wexford peasants; he thought "they had prattled Irish all the while they jangled English." (Description of Ireland, p. 4.)

of the saints; and no sooner did they learn that it was unlawful to frequent these churches and assist at such service, than they at once avoided and execrated it, so much so, that to the present day (1601), throughout all Ireland, wheresoever the heretical or schismatical service is performed, none are found to assist at it, except some foreigners partly from England and partly from other countries; and so, too, the Protestant ministers, of whom the most part is from England; but any that are Irish, make no secret of their having accepted this ministry, not through any affection for the new tenets, but solely that they may be relieved in their distress."*

The fine for non-attendance at the parish church, seems to have been at intervals more severely exacted in Dublin than elsewhere; but when the people were thus compelled to be present at the Protestant service, they made it a matter of amusement and diversion, so that no doubt should remain as to the motives which compelled them to attend there. Thus Sussex writes on the 22nd of July, 1562, in a most mournful strain: "Our religion is so abused, as the papists rejoice; the neutrals do not mislike changes, and the few zealous professors lament the lack of piety. The people without discipline, and utterly void of (the Protestant) religion, came to divine service as to a May-game."† O'Sullivan Beare commemorates some facts which would alone suffice to justify these laments of the lord deputy; sometimes, he tells us, the peasants would pour out all the wine from the communion cup, and allow it to run down through their long flowing beards; sometimes the bread which they received would be flung from one to another; and sometimes such shouts and cries were raised by the unwilling assistants, that the minister could not proceed with the service till the hostile auditors were expelled from the parish church.‡ Even the Anglo-Irish of the pale, though employed by the government as civil and military officers, could not be induced to assist at the Protestant service; and captain Thomas Lee, the notorious agent of Elizabeth, wrote to her majesty in 1594, detailing, indeed, his hopes in regard of the earl of Tyrone (hopes which were very soon blighted by the Irish chieftain), but

* De Regno Hib. (MS.) cap. xx. † Shirley, Orig. Lett. pag. 17.

‡ Hist. Cath. Comp., lib. iv. cap. 27. pag. 134-5.

adding, that the pale's-men, "as soon as they have brought the lord deputy to the church door, depart as if they were wild cats."^{*}

In 1566, the lord deputy, together with Dr. Curwin and the other members of the privy council in Ireland, forwarded to her majesty a report on the state of the Irish church, in which they virtually confess that outside of the three dioceses of Armagh, Meath and Dublin, the reformed doctrines were almost unknown, whilst even in these three dioceses, but little progress had as yet been made.

"We can no less than (as truth is) declare for the archbishops of Dublin and Armagh, and the bishop of Meath, that they are diligent in the functions of their pastoral offices, as well in often and fruitfully preaching of God's glory and true Christian religion themselves, as also in the earnest calling on the and looking to the other pastors and ministers within their provinces and dioceses to do the like; and are earnest and careful exhorters and overseers over the residue under their charge, to reduce them by all good means out of error and contempt of godliness unto right belief and true devotion; and likewise on the part of me, her majesty's deputy, with the rest of her council here, our best endeavour, by God's grace, hath been and shall be, both by good example and earnestness, and by all other good means, to maintain and further the same, there and throughout all this realm universally. Although, for all this, it goeth slowly forward both within their said three dioceses, by reason of Popery being inveterated and leavened in the people's hearts, and in want of livings sufficient for the support of well-chosen and learned curates amongst them; besides the decay of the chancels; and also of the churches universally in ruin, and some wholly down; and out of their said dioceses, in the remote parts of Munster, Connaught and others, the Irish countries and borders thereof, although the commissioners for the ecclesiastical causes have travelled with some of the bishops and other ministers residing in the civil and nearer parts, order cannot yet so well be taken with the residue, until the countries be first brought into more civil and dutiful obedience."[†]

To be convinced of the utter disregard with which the Protestant tenets were received in Ireland, we shall now examine how far they penetrated even amongst the natives of these three model dioceses of Dublin, Meath, and Armagh.

^{*} O'Flaherty's West Connaught, published by R. I. Academy, 1846, pag. 395, not. f.

[†] Shirley, loc. cit. p. 233, seqq.

And first, as regards Dublin, we learn from Adam Loftus of Armagh, that Dr. Curwin but seldom attempted to preach the new* tenets; that the clergy who held the benefices were *open enemies*;† that the canons of the cathedral church, who were moreover parochial clergy,‡ were *old bottles*, and therefore, not suited for the new wine of Protestantism; and hence are styled by the bishop of Meath “a sort of dumb dogs, the living enemies of the truth and of the setters forth thereof, neither teaching nor feeding save themselves;” and, he adds, that speaking generally of them, from the bishop to the smallest canon, they were nothing more than *disguised dissemblers*.§ It cannot therefore surprise us to find the ecclesiastical commissioners, in 1562, requesting the privy council of England to devise some plan *how the pretenders that will not be reformed* may be compelled by law to adopt the new tenets.|| They proposed, indeed, that a special commission should be appointed to visit St. Patrick’s, and another to visit Christ’s Church; but the privy council thought it more prudent for the present not to grant these commissions, and in 1565 we still find Cecil lamenting that St. Patrick’s served only for *lurking papists*.¶ Hence, too, the lord deputy Sydney solemnly avowed that it was absurd to think of extending the reformation to the remainder of the kingdom, whilst Dublin itself *remained unreformed*.

As to Armagh, the ardent Loftus had, indeed, the desire to promote the cause of his royal patron; but alas for his success! his lot was cast in the territory of Shane O’Neil. It was, indeed, preposterous to expect that an *established* bishop could make a successful inroad in that territory, whilst its chieftain defied the power of the English monarch, and who, even when pledging his fealty to her, treated with derision the reformed creed.**

* Shirley, loc. cit., pag. 275. † Ibid. pag. 275. ‡ Ibid. 152, coll. 158.

§ Dr. Brady’s lett., 10th Jan., 1654, ap. Shirley, ibid. pag. 161, seqq.

|| Ibid. pag. 141.

¶ Ibid. pag. 160.

** When he went to England in 1562, to ratify his treaty with Elizabeth, he was attended by a guard of gallowglasses, richly attired in the costume of the country, “armed with the battle-axe, their heads bare, their hair flowing on their shoulders, their linen vests dyed with saffron, with long and open sleeves, and surcharged with short military harness.” (Camden ad. an. 1562.) The courtiers styled him in derision, *a cousin to St. Patrick*. He was at all events remarkable for his charity: “Sitting at meat, before he put one morsel into his mouth, he used to slice a portion above the daily alms, and send it to some beggar at his gate, saying, it was meet to serve Christ first.”—Campion, *Historie*, etc., (printed in 1570) pag. 189.

Hence we cannot be surprised that Loftus himself, when petitioning to be relieved of the intolerable burden of the diocese of Armagh, employs the pitiful argument, that forsooth "*it was neither worth anything to him, nor was he able to do any good in it, as it lay altogether among the Irish.*"*

In fine, as to the diocese of Meath, the devotedness of its saintly bishop, Dr. Walsh, to the Catholic cause is well known, and merited for him the sentence of deprivation, and a painful imprisonment of many years. The Protestant primate in 1565, whilst describing *his* abhorrence of the oath of supremacy adds: "he is one of great credit among his countrymen, and upon whom, as regards matters of religion, they wholly depend."† Even the Protestant bishop of Meath details in a letter of March 14th, 1564, the complete failure which had as yet attended his attempts to reform the district in which his lot was cast: "Oh, what a sea of troubles have I entered into! (he thus writes) storms arising on every side; the ungodly lawyers are not only sworn enemies to the truth, but also for lack of due execution of law, the overthrowers of the country; the ragged clergy are stubborn and ignorantly blind, so there is left little hope of their amendment; the simple multitude is, through continual ignorance, hardly to be won, so that I find *angustiæ undique.*"‡ He was not however, without some hope that his own zealous exertions would in a short time be crowned with more complete success: "for my own diligence I would rather others should speak, than myself; and yet this far I dare presume, by God's help, to do as much good as any other that could be sent hither; for a great number of the simple people, and especially where I was born, *are greedy hearers, and such as I trust will be unfeignedly won.*"§ Within twelve months, however, all these fond hopes had vanished, and he again writes on the 16th May, 1565, that he was only able to hold his ground at all in the diocese, by keeping an open house for all visitors and a good table for his guests: "I am at this present very poor, charged with a great house, driven to large expenses, or else infamy and discredit; for these people will have

* Shirley, pag.

† Ibid. pag. 220.

‡ Ibid. pag. 135-6.

§ Ibid. pag. 136. This letter of Dr. Brady seems to have given the tone to the Protestant missionary reports which for three centuries have from year to year been transmitted to the meeting-houses and Gospel societies of England.

the one or the other; I mean, they will either eat my meat and drink, or else myself: and that I may speak of it without vaunt or comparison, I feed as many continually as any bishop in England doth, and have not as yet provision towards the same; and to do otherwise I cannot, unless I should utterly discredit both myself and my doctrine, which both maketh me to have often a heavy heart and an empty purse; and to help me forward to more grief, I am presently compelled to go into the earl of Desmond's country, leaving my own business and functions behind me undone, to my great charges and some hazard, amongst so untamed a people. . . . To say anything further of the state at this present I will not, only this—all things waxeth rather worse than otherwise; and as I said before, I fear me, without some speedy redress, the whole body will be so sick, as it shall with difficulty recover, so badly are men here disposed.*

In one respect alone, the government enactments seem not to have been fruitless, forsooth, in the prohibition of public Catholic worship. Hatred of the holy sacrifice of the Mass† was, indeed, a chief passion of the religious innovators of the period: and it was assuredly a great triumph for Satan, that its public solemn celebration should be for awhile interdicted in our island. The parish churches were seized on; and, according to the unvarying reports of the lord deputy, very soon fell into decay. These sacred edifices, built by the piety and the voluntary offerings of our forefathers, were soon desecrated: sometimes taxes were imposed upon the people to keep them in repair for an alien worship, but, for the most part, roofless and pillaged, they remained scattered throughout the range of the English pale, as monuments of the violence which was offered in the name of reformation to the church of our sainted isle.

* Shirley, loc. cit. pag. 187-191.

† "I defy James Fitzmaurice to deny that I did not except my duty to the queen in all my dealings with him, and refused to consent to the bringing in of Spaniards and the putting up of the Mass. which things James (Fitzmaurice) was earnest with me for."—Letter of sir Edmond Butler to the earl of Ormond, 23rd of August, 1569, from St. Paps. off., published in app. to *Life and Times of Sir P. Carew*, p. 226.

CHAPTER III.

VACANCY OF THE SEE OF DUBLIN AFTER THE APOSTACY OF CURWIN, AND HOW THE DIOCESE WAS ADMINISTERED UNTIL THE END OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

1. Father D. Wolf, S.J.—2. Rev. T. Newman, R. J. White.—3. Donaldus Dublinensis.—4. Sketch of Irish Character and Customs.

1.—*Father David Wolf, S.J.*

ONE of the most remarkable men who, during the first years of Elizabeth's reign, laboured in our Irish church to gather together the scattered stones of the sanctuary, was father David Wolf,* a member of the order of St. Ignatius. A native of Limerick, he spent seven years in Rome imbibing the full spirit of his order, under the immediate guidance of its holy founder and St. Francis Borgia; and in August, 1560,† he was sent by the Holy See, with all the privileges of apostolic commissary, to confirm his countrymen in the faith, amidst the impending persecutions of Elizabeth. His chief care was to propose learned and zealous men to fill the vacant sees of our island; and the names of Richard Creagh of Armagh;‡ Donald M'Conghail of Raphoe, Eugene O'Hart of Achonry, Maurice M'Bryan of Emly, to omit many others, are a sure guarantee of the fidelity with which he fulfilled this charge.

Father Wolf resided, for the most part, in his native diocese; but his jurisdiction extended to the whole island, and we find him incidentally referred to in contemporary records, as visiting the district of Tyrone, and again, as travelling through various dioceses of Connaught and Ulster. The English agents were filled with alarm at the presence in the country of one who, by

* The sketch of Father Wolf's life given by Dr. Oliver in his "Collections," p. 270, might serve as an admirable illustration of the utter darkness which has so long prevailed in regard of the ecclesiastical history of our Irish Church.

† See for these and many other particulars the examination of Dr. Creagh, archbishop of Armagh, ap. Shirley, loc. cit. p. 171, seqq.

‡ See in appendix an interesting inedited paper, presented in 1563 to the cardinal protector of Ireland, and proposing various individuals for the vacant see of Armagh.

public acclamation, received the title of papal nuncio; and when in 1561, pope Pius IV. invited queen Elizabeth to send her representatives to the council of Trent, she absolutely refused, assigning as one of the chief reasons for her displeasure, that "an Irishman (father Wolf) had been sent from Rome to Ireland to excite there disaffection against her crown."* So watchful were the agents of the English government in pursuit of the Jesuit father, that he was for several years unable to enter within the limits of the pale; and we find him, when delegating his jurisdiction for Dublin and its vicinity to father Newman, in 1563, affirming that so many were the dangers which beset his journey thither, that he feared to visit that district.†

Amongst the papers of the secret archives of the Vatican there is one which was presented in 1560 to the cardinal protector of Ireland, and which sketches the course to be pursued by the agents of the Holy See, whilst performing the visitation of our island. A few extracts will suffice to prove how full of responsibility and peril was the mission entrusted to the disciple of St. Ignatius. "His first care shall be to visit the Catholic leaders, and especially the four chief princes of the kingdom, to commend in the name of his holiness their unflinching constancy and zeal, and to encourage them to persevere in the defence of the Catholic faith." The bishops also were to be visited: "to see if they resided in their dioceses and instructed their flocks; if they were attentive to the due decorum of the sacred edifices, and vigilant in selecting zealous and worthy ministers for the altar." As to the clergy, he was to inquire into their manner of administering the sacraments, and to afford them every aid, especially in administering the holy sacraments of confession and communion, in preaching the word of truth, and in exhorting their Catholic flocks to lead holy and Christian lives. Should any heretical minister be found, the agent of Rome was to guard the people against the contagion of his errors, and above all, to seek in the spirit of charity, to bring him back to the paths of truth. "He must also seek to establish grammar schools, supplying them with Catholic masters, and thus remedy the great ignorance of the natives: admonishing the parents to send

* Laderchi in *Continuat. Annal. Baronii*, ad. an. 1561.

† Shirley, *loc. cit.* p. 129.

their children to these schools, that thus they may be instructed in literature and morality, and at the same time acquire a meet knowledge of the saving truths of faith." If possible, some monasteries were to be established, and exact discipline maintained; hospitals, too, were to be founded, and other places of refuge and succour for the poor.

For these things, and for whatsoever else might be done, no reward or recompense, even in the name of alms, was to be received; the salvation of souls alone was to be the moving-spring, and the reward of every fatigue. Should the glory of God and the interests of religion require it, life itself was to be risked; but in this the laws of Christian prudence were to be observed, and all undue temerity to be shunned. In fine, the Holy See was to be made acquainted with the real state of the Irish church, the losses sustained by the Catholic faith,—the perils to which religion was exposed, and the most opportune aid and succours were to be pointed out that could be granted to sustain the faithful in the dangers to which they were exposed.*

The course traced out in these "instructions" was exactly pursued by father Wolf, and before the close of this chapter, we shall have occasion to cite some of his letters, which, whilst they disclose precious details regarding the condition of our island, clearly demonstrate how indefatigable he was in his labours, and how unceasingly he struggled to restore our suffering church to its primitive comeliness and fervour.

One of the chief wants of Ireland at this period was a place of untainted instruction for Catholic youth. The monastic schools had been swept away by the persecution of Henry VIII., and now, in such districts as were accessible to the English arms, no *mere Irishman* or Catholic could, without risking liberty or life, seek to instruct his fellow-countrymen in the rudiments of literature and religion. To meet this want, a "brief" was addressed by the Holy Father on the 31st of May, 1564, to the newly-consecrated primate, Dr. Richard Creagh, and to father David Wolf,† empowering them to erect schools wheresoever they should deem fit throughout the kingdom of Ireland, and communicating to such schools all the privileges of

* See Appendix to this chapter.

† Ex. Archiv. Colleg. Hib. Romæ.

an university; whilst, at the same time, it was declared that these schools were necessary for the establishment of due order, and for the maintenance of the Catholic faith. Neither Dr. Creagh, however, nor father Wolf, was allowed sufficient time to carry into effect the wise designs of Rome. The history of Dr. Creagh's imprisonment is well known. Father Wolf shared in his sufferings, being loaded with chains, and thrown into the dungeons of Dublin Castle. On the 13th of March, 1568, a letter was despatched from Rome to the nuncio in Madrid, instructing him to employ all the papal influence at that court, to procure, through the mediation of the Spanish monarch, the liberation of these two ecclesiastics, whose labours in the sacred cause of religion had already won for them the applause of the whole Christian world.

"We have been informed," thus writes the sainted pontiff, Pius V., "that our venerable brother, the archbishop of Armagh, who, as you are aware, is primate of Ireland, has been arrested by the English and cast into prison in the tower of London; and that our beloved son David, of the society of Jesus, is also closely confined by the same English in the city of Dublin, both of them being treated with the greatest severity. Their sufferings overwhelm us with affliction, on account of their singular merits and of their zeal for the Catholic faith. And, as it is our desire and our duty to succour them as far as is in our power, we know of no other means for doing so, than that our dearest son, his Catholic majesty, should employ his authority with the English queen in their behalf. You, therefore, will use every endeavour with his majesty to this effect, and you will urge, and request, and solicit in our name, his letters to his ambassador and to the queen, to obtain the liberation of these prisoners. Than which favour none other could be at present more acceptable to us.

"Given in Rome, at St. Peter's, under the seal of the Fisherman, this 13th day of March, 1568."*

The mediation of the Spanish court, however, was without effect; and father David was detained in the closest custody till 1572, when he happily made his escape from Dublin Castle and, accompanied by sir Rice Corbally and the son of James Fitzmaurice, took refuge in Spain. Sir Peter Carew, writing to the privy council in England on 6th February, 1573, characteristically remarks: "James Fitzmaurice hath sent his son with one David Wolf, an arrant traitor, into Spain, to practise his

* See orig. in appendix.

old devices.”* He soon, however, returned to the former field of his labours, and in 1575, we find him engaged once more in visiting and consoling the Catholics of Ireland.† We shall conclude our notice of this indefatigable and holy man with the words of the author of *Cambrensis Eversus*: “I saw a dispensation granted by David Wolf, of Limerick, to Richard Lynch, a citizen of Galway, grandfather to Nicholas Lynch, provincial of the Irish Dominicans, who died at Rome about twenty years ago, deeply regretted by his friends. The dispensation was signed David Wolf, apostolic nuncio.”‡ Orlandini speaks of him in his history of the society of Jesus: “I have learned that he was a man of extraordinary piety, who fearlessly denounced crime whenever it was committed. When the whole country was embroiled in war, he took refuge in the castle of Clunoan, on the borders of Thomond, and of the county of Galway;§ but when he heard that its occupants lived by plunder, he scrupled to take any nourishment from them, and soon after sickened and died.”||

We have no precise record of the year in which he died; but it seems to have been in 1578, as no mention is made of him in the detailed correspondence of 1579 and the following years, during the eventful period of the second Desmond war. The name, *David Wolf sacerdos Hibernus*, occurs for the last time in a list transmitted by the Spanish nuncio to Rome, on 3rd June, 1578;¶ and from this list we learn, that he was then living in Lisbon, supported by the generous contributions of the Holy See.

* Life and Times of sir Peter Carew, pag. 290, appendix H. In a note on the above passage the editor, John Maclean, Esq., says: “of sir Davy Wolf (priest) it is stated in a letter of the state paper office, indorsed as having been received on the 13th October, 1572, ‘He that foreswore himself and fled from Dublin is gone to Spain, and carried the son of James Fitzmaurice with him, accompanied by sir Rice Corbally.’”

† Lett. of James Fitzmaurice from St. Malo, 1576, 31st January.

‡ Perhaps when returning a second time to Ireland he received the title of *nuncio*; it is probable, however, that he was only commissary. He was commonly styled nuncio, even on his first arrival, though he was certainly at that time only *commissary apostolic*.

§ Now Cluain Dubhain or Clunoan, an old castle close to the boundary of the county Galway, and not far from Rockvale, in the parish of Kilkeedy, barony of Inchiquin, county Clare.

|| Camb. Evers., vol. ii., pag. 735.

¶ Ex. Archiv. Secr. Vatican.

2.—*Rev. T. Newman; Rev. J. White.*

The diocese of Dublin was widowed of its chief pastor for many years; but during that interval the Holy See, with watchful vigilance, ceased not to provide for its spiritual wants. As we have seen, David Wolf was destined to our island in 1560. Soon after his arrival, we find him delegating his apostolic faculties for Dublin and its vicinity to a worthy priest of that diocese named Thadeus Newman—authorizing him to absolve from all censures which the faithful might have incurred, and to reconcile to the bosom of Holy Church all those who, by choice, had been led astray into the paths of heresy or schism. The letter, by which he delegates this authority, is dated from Limerick, and thus begins:

“David Wolf, a priest of the Society of Jesus and commissary of our most holy father pope Pius IV., to the most illustrious princes, and to the whole kingdom of Ireland, to our well-beloved in Christ, Thadeus, priest of the diocese of Dublin, health in him who is true health. As it is not possible for me, on account of the dangers which beset the journey, to visit, in accordance with the commission entrusted to me by the Holy See, those districts in which you reside; and as those who may stand in need of the apostolic indult are impeded from coming hither, by the wars and contentions and mutual jealousies of the oppressors of this nation, and violators of all justice; it has seemed proper to commit all my faculties to you, whom I regard as a faithful minister of the altar, and well suited to discharge this office.”*

No sooner was father Wolf removed from the theatre of his earthly labours than another Irish priest, Rev. John White, was sent to our island by Gregory XIII., with the most extensive faculties for all the dioceses of Ireland. The brief of his appointment is dated the 4th of November, 1578, and in it he is described as well versed in sacred literature, and as one who, by his integrity and virtues, had earned the esteem and confidence of the Holy See. His jurisdiction was not limited to the power of absolving from the excommunication attached to the guilt of heresy, and in all other cases reserved to the pontiff, but extended, moreover, to dispensations in marriages contracted

* See the original in Shirley, loc. cit. p. 128-129.

within the prohibited degrees,—the abuse of which marriages, “in consequence of the disturbed and licentious condition of the times,” is described as “prevalent in some districts.”*

Even the bishops of other dioceses in Ireland were more than once commissioned by Rome to assist the faithful of Dublin in their spiritual wants. Thus, the archbishop of Armagh, Dr. Richard Creagh, received faculties for the entire province of Dublin as well as for that of Armagh, on the 10th of April, 1575; and on the 8th of the same month, similar faculties for his own diocese, as also for Dublin, had been granted to Dr. William Walsh, the heroic bishop of Meath. Lest, however, either of these briefs should perchance not have effect, through the imprisonment or other vexations to which these prelates were subjected, another brief was expedited on the same 10th of April, 1575, addressed to Dr. Edmund Tanner, bishop of Cork and Cloyne, authorizing him to absolve from all reserved cases, etc., not only in his own diocese, but also “in his native province of Dublin.”†

Owing to these wise arrangements of the Holy See, and to the untiring zeal of the priesthood, the diocese of Dublin remained immoveably attached to the Catholic cause, and notwithstanding the long vacancy of the see, and though its emoluments were all seized on by an alien clergy, and every art which court policy could devise was employed, to undermine the devotedness of its faithful people to the religion of their fathers, nevertheless, we find that their fidelity was a theme of eulogy in Rome in 1579, and a Vatican manuscript of that year, whilst sketching the various sees of Ireland, says that Dublin, though vacant for many years, and now held by an heretical bishop, yet remains unabated in its ardour for the Catholic cause: “perstat tota civitas in religione Catholica.”‡

* See the original from Archiv. Secret. Brevium, in appendix.

† The above dates are taken from the original briefs in Archiv. Secret. Brev. Romæ.

‡ Ex Archiv. Secr. Vatic.

3.—*Donaldus Dublinensis.*

That an archbishop named *Donaldus*, or Donagh, was the immediate predecessor of Matthew de Oviedo in the diocese of Dublin, there can be but little doubt; he is, in fact, expressly commemorated as such in the bull* by which Dr. Oviedo was appointed to that see. With the exception of the name, nothing can be affirmed with certainty regarding this prelate; and all the details of his episcopate are involved in utter obscurity. This however, cannot surprise us, when we reflect that the acts of most of the other bishops of our Irish church at this period, have been consigned to a like oblivion.

Without venturing beyond the limits of conjecture, we may, perhaps, be permitted to suggest, that this *Donaldus* was the justly-celebrated Dr. M'Conghaill, for many years bishop of Raphoe, and that the year 1587 or 1588 was the date of his appointment to the see of Dublin. The period of momentary tranquillity† which our church enjoyed between 1585 and 1589, gave an opportunity to the Holy See of nominating a bishop to this vacant diocese;‡ and it is more than probable that in choosing a successor for St. Laurence O'Toole, the Holy See lent a willing ear to the petition often repeated in the correspondence of that period, that, forsooth, those only should be advanced to the chief dignities of our church who had borne the brunt of the persecution,§ and faithfully resided amidst the

* "Ecclesia Dublinensis cui bonæ memoriæ Donaldus, archiepus. Dublinensis dum viveret præsidebat, per obitum dicti Donaldi archiepi. qui extra Romanam curiam debitum naturæ persolvit, pastoris solatio destituta," etc.—(Bulla Clementis VIII. 3 Nonas Maij, 1600, ex Archiv. Secret. Brevium.)

† The violence of the persecution from 1590 to 1599, precludes the supposition of a bishop being appointed to Dublin during that interval. Moreover, from the Vatican list of 1579 we learn, that no bishop had been appointed to it during the first years of Elizabeth's reign; and from a letter of the bishop of Killaloe, 29th October, 1584 (in which, speaking of the bishops appointed during the preceding years, he omits all mention of Dublin), we may conclude that the archbishop had not been appointed before that date.

‡ Thus, in 1587 we find a bishop appointed to the see of Leighlin, the condition of which diocese was somewhat similar to that of Dublin. From a letter of two Jesuit fathers, dated Paris, 4th June, 1584, (ap. Theiner Continuat. Baronii, vol. iii. p. 818), we learn that the Holy See had lately begun to deliberate on the appointment of a bishop for Dublin.

§ We only know of one other bishop in Ireland of the name Donaldus or *Donatus*, about this period: he was bishop of Killala in 1578; being subsequently transferred to Down and Connor. He died bishop of that see in 1582.

flocks entrusted to their care.* The translation of bishops, even to sees in different provinces, was not unfrequent at this period:† we shall have occasion to remark hereafter how the second in succession from Donaldus, in the diocese of Dublin, Dr. Eugene Matthews, was, in a similar manner, transferred from Clogher to that archiepiscopal see: and the death of Dr. McConghail, in 1589,‡ probably before he was able even to take possession of his new diocese, will sufficiently explain the silence of our Irish records regarding this worthy occupant of the see of Dublin.

Donald McConghail was a priest of the diocese of Raphoe, and after visiting the eternal city in 1560, was for many months the constant companion of the apostolic delegate, father David Wolf, in the visitation of various districts of Ireland. Before the close of 1561, he was deputed a second time on a special mission to the central see of the Catholic world. He was, at the same time, bearer of an important letter from Wolf to the cardinal protector of Ireland, in which most interesting details are given of the actual condition of the Irish church, and of some individuals who were destined in after times to be numbered amongst the brightest ornaments of our country. We have already had occasion more than once to refer to this letter, and we now present it in full to the reader:—

“May the true peace and love of our Redeemer be in our hearts.

“I addressed a letter a few days ago, through sir William Neon, to your excellency, on the state of the church in this district of Munster; but now I deem it better to send in person the bearer of this letter, Donald M’Gomghaill, to give full details to you, as he was the companion of my journey through Ireland; and as he is a man of judgment, well acquainted with the circumstances of this country, having also (as I will just now mention) some other particular business there.

“This Donald being my companion in Connaught, we saw there (though we did not visit them) the archbishop of Tuam and the bishop of Clonfert, who in the ways of this world are good and honest men.

* It was for the same motive, that in the same year 1587 the bishop of Ardagh, Dr. Edmund Magauran, was transferred to the archiepiscopal see of Armagh.

† We have just referred in a preceding note, to the translation of Donatus, bishop of Killala, to Down and Connor. His predecessor in the see of Killala, Dr. Raymond O’Gallagher, was translated in 1569 to the diocese of Derry.

‡ Annals of the Four Masters.

Both of them have taken the oath of allegiance to the queen, as I have already written about others in Munster. The archbishop's name is Christopher Botteghin (Bodkin), who acquired the archbishoprick (as everyone says) by force of arms and royal authority; he himself would not make any statement as to his appointment, merely declaring that cardinal Pole of happy memory made an agreement between him and a certain Arthur O'Frehir, who is the true and legitimate archbishop, and is still living, though expelled from the bishopric by the aforesaid Dr. Christopher. This same Dr. Botteghin holds the arch-diocese of Tuam, with the dioceses of Kilmacduagh, Enaghduagh, and Mayo, which last two sees have, as he asserts, been long attached to the see of Tuam; others, however, assert the contrary, and state that he, on his own authority and by permission of the crown, united them to Tuam together with Kilmacduagh. He told me that the aforesaid Arthur resigned the see into his hands: and, indeed, if the Holy See would accept his resignation, Dr. Botteghin would seem to me much better suited for the government of the diocese than Dr. Arthur; for he is skilled in administration, and has great influence with the gentry of the district. In fact, the church of Tuam was for three hundred years used as a fortress by the gentry, without the holy sacrifice or the divine office, till he took it by force out of their hands, with a great risk of his own life: so that where formerly horses and other animals were kept, now Mass is celebrated, and he himself usually assists in choir every day, although there are not more than twenty or thirty houses in that district of Tuam. His morality is unimpeached, and he is well liked by everyone, even by those adversaries who had formerly possession of the church.

"A certain Malachy O'Molony, canon of Kilmacduagh, has granted some forged dispensations, as your excellency will see from the annexed copy, in which he alleges the approbation and sanction of Dr. Botteghin, who however has solemnly assured me that he never saw or approved of such a rescript; so that the said Malachy is a forger of apostolic letters. When cited before the archbishop, he refused to present himself; and I wish to know how I am to manage in his regard, as he is contumacious, and has no authentic rescript for his assumed authority.

"Bernard O'Huyghin, bishop of Elphin, has resigned his bishopric in favour of a Dominican father, the prior of Sligo, named Andrew Crean, a man of piety and sanctity, who is moreover held in great esteem by the laity, not so much for his learning as for his amiability and holiness. The said Bernard was a good and religious man as regarded himself, but he was not acceptable to the people; and seeing that he was losing the temporalities of the see through the dislike which the laity had conceived for him, he chose father Andrew, who is beloved by everyone, that thus all that was lost might be regained. This father now proceeds to Rome, with the permission of his provincial, to obtain that see, bearing with him the resignation of Dr. O'Huyghin. He asked me for testimonial letters; and though personally I know but little about him, I can attest the fame for virtue which he enjoys throughout the whole island.

"Father Andrew is accompanied by another religious of the same

order, named Owen, or Eugene O'Harty,—a great preacher, of exemplary life, and full of zeal for the glory of God: he lived for about eight years in Paris; and I am of opinion (though he knows nothing of it, and goes thither on a quite different errand) that he would be a person well suited for a bishopric. And should anything happen to father Andrew (for accidents are the common lot of all), father Eugene would be a good substitute, although the present bishop did not resign in his favour. Should it please God, however, to preserve father Andrew and appoint him to the see of Elphin, his companion might be appointed to the see of Achonry, which diocese has remained vacant since the demise of Cormac O'Coyn of happy memory, of the order of St. Francis. The cathedral church of Achonry is at present used as a fortress by the gentry of the neighbourhood, and does not retain one vestige of the semblance of religion; and I am convinced that the aforesaid Eugene, by his good example and holy life, and with the aid of his friends, would be able to take back that church, and act with it as Dr. Christopher did in Tuam.

"The bearer of this letter, Donald M'Gomghail, was my companion in the district of Connaught, and there is no one in Ireland who is better able to give you accurate information about everything; wherefore I send him to Rome for a twofold purpose—1. to give you intelligence about myself, as well as about the bishops and archbishops, etc.; and 2. that as the bishop of Raphoe has lately been taken away from us, I know of no one better suited to be his successor; he is very learned, according to the style of literature of this country, and he is beloved by every one; he moreover spent some time in Rome last year.

"About fourteen persons have started from Ireland without any letters from me, to procure that bishopric; amongst them is the dean of Raphoe, a man who, as I have been informed by trustworthy persons, is far better skilled in the sword than in the cross. I pray your excellency not to give credence to him, should he plead ignorance of my coming to Ireland; for there is not an individual in the whole country, whether heretic or Catholic, that has not heard of my mission hither, in consequence of a notification which I caused to be published in every part of the island. As the vessel is now about to start, I will say no more, but recommend these three travellers to your excellency, as well as sir William Neou, whom I already sent thither, praying God to preserve your excellency in health of body and mind, to His own greater glory and to the great advantage of this afflicted country.

"From Limerick, the 12th of October, 1561.

"Your excellency's unworthy servant,

"DAVID WOLF."

The following day father Wolf gave to Donald and his companions another introductory letter, thinking that, perhaps, on

* See appendix.

arriving in France, they might with sufficient safety be able to consign to the courier the letter just cited:—

“The bearers of this note (he says) are the same about whom I wrote in my letter of yesterday, and in order that they may be able to despatch that letter by the courier, I gave them also the present lines, praying your excellency to receive them as persons recommended by me. The name of the secular priest is Donald Macgongail; he is a man well versed in the affairs of this nation, and I wish your excellency would command him, in virtue of holy obedience, to make known to you how Donatus, archbishop of Armagh, and the other prelates of this country, deport themselves. His companions are Andrew O’Creayn and Eugene O’Hart, whom I have already recommended to you, and whom I now recommend anew. I will add no more, as I leave everything in the hands of Donald. May our blessed Saviour grant me his true love, and preserve your excellency in health of body and mind.”*

This recommendation of Wolf was not without effect, and the 28th of January, 1562, saw Andrew Crean,† Eugene O’Hart,‡ and Donald Maccongail§ appointed to three important sees in Ireland. Before their departure from Rome they received the episcopal consecration, and we next meet two of them, Dr. M’Conghaill and Dr. O’Hart, in company with Thomas O’Herlihy, bishop of Ross, entering the town of Trent on 25th May, 1562, to take part in the deliberations of the ecumenical council, which was then holding its sittings there. The votes of these three bishops are occasionally recorded in the history of that great synod. Thus, on the question as to the expediency of allowing communion under both kinds to the laity, the bishop of Achonry voted in the affirmative, adding the clause, however, that he remitted the matter to the Pope’s discretion; whilst the bishops of Ross and Raphoe gave the question a direct negative. On the sacrament of holy orders their votes and reasoning were

* This letter is dated 13th October, 1561, from *Pilchua*, which, however, is written in a most illegible hand, and probably is a mistake of the copyist for *Kilchree*.

† DeBurgo erroneously writes this name Xerea (Hib. Dom pag. 486). He was a Dominican, and belonged to the convent of Sligo. He was appointed bishop of Elphin on 28th January, 1562. DeBurgo also errs in making Dr. O’Hart prior of Sligo at this period; it appears from the letter of Wolf that that office was held by Dr. Crean.

‡ Appointed eod. die. bishop of Achonry, vacant by the death of Cormac O’Coyn, O.S.F.

§ Appointed eod. die. bishop of Raphoe, vacant by the death of Arthur O’Gallagher, who died in 1561.

deemed of much importance, and the abuses to which they occasionally refer, throw much light on the condition of our church. For instance, they lament that many persons when nominated to benefices neglected to receive ordination, whilst, nevertheless, they seized on the fruits and revenues attached to these benefices; and also that too many bishops were appointed, receiving their title *in partibus infidelium*, and hence often occasioned annoyance to the bishops in whose sees they resided. This latter abuse is easily illustrated from other contemporary documents. The Annals of the Four Masters at this very period commemorate a bishop apparently without any see, and living in the diocese of Raphoe;* and a letter of Cognosius Magyir of Fermanagh, on 28th March, 1568, mentions that there were then two bishops in Clogher, and at the same time the apostate Miles Magrath was seeking to intrude himself as a third claimant for that see.†

In the metrical catalogue of the bishops who assisted at the council of Trent, Donald M'Gonghaill receives the epithet of "the just," whilst he is at the same time described as in the flower of his age, and adorned with the comeliness of every pastoral virtue.‡ On the close of the synod in 1563, no bishops were more punctual than the representatives of Ireland, in complying with the decree of residence; they hastened to their respective flocks, and though at the risk of their lives, unflinchingly persevered in ruling the dioceses entrusted to them. Of the details of Dr. Donald's subsequent episcopate, but little has been handed down to us. Towards the close of 1568, or the beginning of 1569,§ a provincial synod was held in the province of Armagh, for the purpose of promulgating the decrees of the council of Trent, but being impeded by the wars, the bishops of Raphoe and Derry were unable to be present at it|| About the same time the bishop of Derry died, and amongst the papers

* Annals, etc., pag. 1929.

† Ex. Archiv. Secret. Vatic.

‡ "Post hos, tres juvenes quos frigida Hibernia legat,
Eugenium, Thomamque bonos, justumque Donaldum,
Omnes ornatos ingens virtutibus orbis,
Misit ut hanc scabiem tollant morbumque malignum,
Sacratiss omnes induti tempora mitris."

§ Letter of Richard Creagh from prison, in Arch. Sec. Vat. written in 1569.

|| Lett. of Rich. Armagh: ut sup. "Rapotensis et Darensis non iverunt ad concilium provinciale propter bella."

of cardinal Morone in 1569, there is a note to the effect, that whilst Cornelius O'Cervallan was recommended as his successor by David Wolf, another, styled *the Abbot Magonius* (perhaps Magennis) was recommended by the bishops of Kilmore and Raphoe, as also by the chapter of Derry. The next incident we find connected with our worthy bishop is, that faculties were granted to him on the 4th of May, 1575; it was also for many years the traditional record of the northern clergy, that he assisted at a provincial council which was held in the diocese of Clogher about the year 1587,* in which further arrangements were made regarding the Tridentine disciplinary canons. The names of the prelates who assisted at this synod would shed lustre on even the most august assembly. The bishop of Achonry, though from a different province, was present at it, and three, at least, of the provincial members were destined to add new glory to our church, by sealing with their blood the testimony of their faith.

The Annals of the Four Masters record the death of Dr. M'Conghail on the 29th of September, 1589. On the summit of a hill which rises above the harbour of Killybegs, in the county Donegal, and beside a moss-grown cemetery, there stands a ruin, which tradition marks out as the oratory which our holy bishop was accustomed to visit, to perform his devotions and offer the holy sacrifice for his flock; and the same tradition records, that in the adjoining cemetery repose his venerable remains. No monument, indeed, adorns his place of burial; but the proudest monument to his memory is the living tradition of his virtues, which, throughout the length and breadth of Ireland, despite the variations of three hundred years, remains unchanged to the present day.

was translated to Armagh, 1st of July, 1587, and was not appointed to the see of Ardagh till about 1585. The synod must consequently have been held between these two dates.

* All that can be said with certainty is, that it was held between 1582 and 1589. Dr. O'Devany, bishop of Down and Connor, who assisted at it, was not appointed till 1582; and Dr. M'Conghail, who was also present, died in 1589. The only record of this synod known to exist, and transcribed by Dr. Hugh Coghlan about 1649, is mutilated in the date of the synod. See some particulars connected with this synod in "Appendix Consultationis Provincialis (1614)" published in collection on "Irish Church History," pag. 139. We had written thus far, when we discovered some additional data for determining the year in which this synod was held. The bishop of Ardagh, who assisted at it,

4.—*A Sketch of Irish Character and Customs at this period.*

We are indebted to the interest taken by foreign courts in the struggle of the Irish Catholics against the persecuting tyranny of Elizabeth for two important narratives, detailing the chief physical and social features of our country. One of them was written by a Spaniard who had taken part in the expedition to aid the Geraldines, in 1579: he had spent six months in visiting various districts of the island, and in 1581, his narrative, which principally regards the social life and customs of the natives, was presented to the Holy See. The other narrative was written about six years later, by an exiled Irish bishop then present at the papal court. He dwells for the most part on the physical resources of the country, and shows what an important bulwark of the Catholic cause Ireland would be, were it preserved from the assaults of the English heretics:

“THE MANNERS AND CUSTOMS OF THE IRISH, ESPECIALLY IN THE
DESMOND TERRITORY.*

1. “Money is rarely used in this country, and purchases are for the most part made by exchange of goods.

2. “If you except the port towns, there are no hotels or lodging-houses to be found in the island. Every traveller sets up in the first house he meets, and, there, is provided with whatsoever he desires, gratuitously.

3. “Table is not usually laid until evening, but in the meantime drink is not denied to travellers.

4. “There are eight sorts of draughts: beer made of barley and water, milk, whey, wine, broth, mead,† usquebagh, and spring water.

* See the original in appendix; it was presented to the Holy See in 1581, and is now published for the first time from the Archiv. Secret. Vatican. There is a second, but very inaccurate MS. copy of it in the Vatican library.

† This drink was generally made of honey and milk: Ireland was remarkable, as we shall just now see, for its abundance of honey. Peter Lombard (Comment. c. 8) writes: “Quorundam opinio fuit insulam hanc expertem esse mellis atque ceræ. . . . Sed hic reclamant prorsus experientia qua constat in tanta abundantia apes hic mellificas esse ut non solum in alveariis sed et in aliis obviis vasis, in cavatis arborum truncis, et in cavernis terræ favos reponant distentissimos.”

5. "The men wrap themselves up in mantles: the women wear large linen wide-spreading bonnets. The knives which are used at table are so long, that they exceed even their daggers in size.

6. "The more honourable person sits in the centre; the next in dignity sits at his right, and so on in order until the range of seats is filled. All sit facing towards the entrance-door: that thus, they say, they may be always ready to repel the attacks of their enemies.

7. "They are so firmly attached to the Catholic faith, that they seem never to have given ear to the heretics. They arise at midnight for prayer and meditation, to which some devote an entire hour, others half an hour: the fires are always lit at the same time.

8. "Their language has a great affinity with the Chaldaic and Hebrew: many of the letters are aspirated, whence it happens that the words seem different when written, and when pronounced.

9. "At the Lord's Prayer in the Mass, they arise, and remain standing during its recital.

10. "The men salute each other with a kiss: the women also salute each other in the same manner.

11. "On Wednesdays they abstain from flesh-meats; on Fridays, from white-meats and milk.

12. "Although they are devoid of all polite training, they nevertheless treat each other with such kindness and urbanity, that during six months, I did not see even the soldiers come once to blows: this spirit of concord seems to extend to the horses and dogs, wherefore, I am disposed to refer it all to the mildness of the climate and temperature.

13. "The climate is so mild, that they enjoy almost a perpetual spring; and herbage is never wanting for the flocks of sheep and the herds of cattle.

14. "No poisonous animals are found in Ireland: there are neither snakes, nor vipers, nor toads.*

15. "They eat a great deal when food can be found; but they also fast with alacrity for two or even three days.

* In a life of Marianus Scotus, written by an Irish monk of Ratisbon in the twelfth century, Ireland is thus described: "*Dulce solum natalis patriæ, solum omni genere serpentum ac universis vermibus nocivis sequestratum, montes et colles et valles et saltus venatibus aptos, amœnissima fluminum fluentia, et virides terras, in puris fontibus amnes,*" etc.—Ap. Bollandist. Feb. 9th, page 361-6. Bede also writes (lib. 1, Hist. Ang. cap. i.): "*Nullum in Hibernia reptile videri solet, nullus vivere serpens valet; nam sœpe illo de Britannia allati serpentes mox ut proximante terris navigio, odore illius aëris attracti fuerint, intereunt. Quin potius omnia pæne quæ de eadem insula sunt, contra venenum valent. Denique vidimus quibusdam a serpente percussis, rasa folia codicum qui de Hibernia fuerunt, ipsam rasuram aquæ inmissam ac potui datam, talibus protinus vim veneni grassantis, totum inflati corporis absumpsisse ac sedasse tumorem.*" Peter Lombard (loc. cit. cap. 9), speaking of the Irish timber, adds: "*Ad domus quoque ædificandas cum in Angliam tum in alias regiones solebant exportari quia præter alia commoda ubicumque venenatæ sunt aranæ manent semper munda (ligna), et immunia ab earum telis, ex illa mirum prærogativa qua quæcumque ex Hibernia adferuntur, contra venenata cuncta valent.*"

16. "They show an inviolable fidelity to their chiefs, at whose discretion they make peace or war.

17. "In battle each one follows his own natural ardour, and rushes on the ranks of the enemy without paying attention to the course pursued by his companions.

18. "In swiftness, they equal and sometimes surpass the horses.

19. "They freely seat themselves on hay, or straw, or grass; but they avoid the hard ground and benches.

20. "They mount their horses, seizing them by the left ear, and using nothing to support their feet.

21. "They use no leggings, and never even make them.

22. "The nobility are clothed in garments made of skin and adorned with various colours.

23. "They cultivate sacred poetry* with great assiduity; they do not undertake to compose verses on sacred subjects, except after fasting and prayer. When important negotiations have to be made, the bards are always chosen as the negociators.

24. "At meals, before the thanksgiving is made, the bishop or priests who may be present make an exhortation, and all listen to it with great attention."

The second narrative, though dwelling chiefly on the material features of our island, is not less interesting. It is as follows:

"DISCOURSE† ON THE KINGDOM OF IRELAND, AND ON THE NUMBER OF TROOPS THAT WILL BE NECESSARY FOR ITS RE-CONQUEST, ADDRESSED TO POPE GREGORY XIII.

"The kingdom of Ireland is almost equal in size to England, when considered as separated from Scotland, which is smaller than either of the other two islands.

"It abounds in corn and cattle, in‡ wool and , in flesh

* Peter Lombard, in his "*Commentarius de Regno Hib.*" cap. 12, writes: "*Musica delectantur et poesi. Ad militiam maxime sunt affecti, et ad eam cum primis quibusque apti nationibus utpote animosi, fortes, expediti, patientes laboris, et inediae, appetentes gloriae et capacissimi cum totius disciplinae militaris tum usus atque exercitii armorum omnis generis. Scientias seu liberales disciplinas multum amant et viros eruditos plurimum honorant. Sunt etiam passim acutis praediti ingeniis et ubi commoditatem ad id nacti addicunt se libenter studiis, diligenter eis insistent, prouiores vero ad ea feruntur studiorum sive scientiae genera in quibus ingenii acumen, quam alia mentis vis exercet se et exerit.*"

† This discourse was written in Italian, and is now published for the first time from *Biblioth. Vatic. Codex Urbinus*, 854, fog. 408, et seqq; see the orig. in appendix. In the translations, some irrelevant passages are omitted.

‡ In a letter of John Hooker to Sir Peter Carew, on 26th May, 1568, we find the following interesting description of the fertility of the barony of Idrome, of which, forsooth, that adventurer had resolved to deprive the rightful owners:—

and in fish, both of the sea and of fresh water,*— in milk and honey, of which there is such an abundance to be found, even in the woods and where the bee-hives are not cared, that the inhabitants make use of

“The soyle and countrie of that baronny is very large and great, and yn all Europa not a more plesauit, sweter, or frutefuller Lande; the same beinge referted with all thinges necessarye for man yn any respecte, servinge for pleasure or neede, for huntinge the stagge, the hare, the fox, the wolff, for your pleasure at will; for hawkinge with all kyndes of hawkes, at partridge, rayle, fesaunt, crene, byttern, and a number of other foules, as miche as can be wished and desyred: for fyshinge there is as miche as any freshewater can geve; the seas are somewhat dystaunte from this countrie of Hydron, but yet, on the one side, a goodly river called the Barro heateth through the whole countrie, and this so serveth the countrie, that upon it they do conveighe all their comodities and marchaundyses from the seas or from Waterford even to the house of Laghlyn.” (“The Life and Times of Sir Peter Carew, Bart.,” by John Maclean, Esq., London, 1857, pag. 198, from the MSS. of Lambeth Palace.)

* Venerable Bede styles Ireland, “*Dives lactis et mellis insula nec vinearum expers; piscium volucrumque sed et cervorum venatu insignis.*” (Hist. Ang. lib. i. cap. 1.) Peter Lombard, in his “*Commentarius*,” devotes the entire sixth chapter to the salubrity of the island. He writes as follows:—“*Salubritatem hujus regionis, multa sunt quæ probant et insigniter commendant, sed potissimum hæc quinque dotes: 1. temperies cœli perpetua; 2. aquarum puritas et præstantia; 3. ciborum omnis generis et præsertim carniarum atque piscium suavitas; 4. morborum paucitas, raritas, et levitas; 5. Prærogativa singularis contra venena et venenata cuncta animantia.*” His remark on the purity of the waters is especially interesting:—“*Sunt illæ hic purissimæ et clarissimæ idque non in fontium tantum primis scatebris atque rivis sed in ipsis quoque lacubus imo in fluminibus donec eas misceantur cum refluxu maris. Sunt etiam præter id quod gustu delectabiles, adeo virtute præstantes ut plurimæ sint quæ ad præstandas sanitates plurimum valeant. Quæ virtus ut in nonnullis concedenda est inesse a naturali earum excellentia, ita et quibusdam non est dubitandum eam impertitam atque impetratam per merita sanctorum hujus regionis a quibus proinde eas suas olim acceptas nomenclaturas etiamnum hodie immutatas retinent.*” As to the food, he adds:—“*Quod ad ciborum spectat suavitatem testantur exteri et nominatim Angli, qui hic aliquando commorati, carnes atque etiam pisces in Hibernia multo esse delicatiores et suaviores quam sint in ipsa Anglia; unde solent curiosius indagare, cum primum huc adveniunt an id a natura inditum an vero arte aliqua sit inductum.*” In the seventh chapter he speaks of the Irish fisheries; and with very few changes, his words would be applicable to the present day:—“*In mari, quacumque Hiberniam alluit, in portibus ejus et in sinibus, in fluviis et in lacubus tanta est varietas et abundantia piscium et quidem omni anni tempore, quantam vel nulla alia habet Europæ regio vel certe non cum ea commoditate qua hinc velut ex præcipuo quodam Europæ vivario aliis ejus regionibus ubertas ista communicari possit, si talis esset rerum administratio qualis deberet merito, cum ad ipsam ditandam insulam, tum ad commodandum externis nationibus. Quin etiam modo utcumque administrantur res, præterquamquod indigenis ubi aliqualis saltem industria adhibetur, semper sit provisum abunde de piscibus, etiam magna effertur copia ad externas quasdam regiones, partim per Hibernos sed præcipue per mercatores Angliæ. Quæ quidem, exclusis mercatoribus et piscatoribus aliarum nationum, suis dumtaxat subditis reservat jus et potestatem hic piscandi. Unde videre est per omne anni tempus passim in Hiberniæ portibus et æstuariis innumeros piscatores Anglos, quod hic quam in Anglia experiantur piscationem, uti copiosiores sine comparatione ita et multo utiliorem etiam expensis omnibus quas faciunt in rationem adductis.*”

wax and honey according as they want it, and pay no further attention to it.

"There are mines of gold, silver, copper, and lead. Iron is found in all parts of the island." There is also an abundance of lakes and rivers.

"It has a peculiar breed of horses, which are not too high of stature, but are swift, and not unlike the Spanish horses.† It yields also the same articles of produce which are yielded by England.

"There is a superabundance of hawks and falcons, which are of a superior quality, and are highly esteemed in France.

"In winter the cold is not so severe as it is in England. No sort of serpents or obnoxious animals—not even a spider is to be found there, so much so, that its clay is carried into England and Scotland as a remedy against serpents.

"The Reasons why the Irish are the Natural Enemies of England:

"The first and chief reason is the difference of religion.

"The second is, that the English kings have, contrary to every right and justice, usurped the title of kings of Ireland. . . .

"The third is, that the English crown has tyrannized over our island, seeking only its own aggrandizement, without paying any attention to the interests of the natives; and entrusting the government to English agents, who use the most tyrannical means to enrich themselves, transporting its produce into England, taxing the people contrary to its laws and ancient privileges, maintaining wars and domestic strife amongst the inhabitants, and, in a word, satiating their blood with the very blood and bowels of the natives.

* Peter Lombard, loc. cit. cap. 9, gives the following important testimony regarding the mines of Ireland:—"Sunt hic et quidem copiose mineralia plurima et argentum vivum, alumen, vitreolum, sulphur: immo et metalla in suo quoque genere admodum præstantia. . . . Et ferrum quidem facili opera eruitur et coquitur ab iis etiam qui metallorum parum sunt periti, et nihilominus probatur tam excellens ut non aliud in Europa magis sit durable. Alia metalla nonnisi tecte adhuc et parte sunt attacta. Attamen sic tentata ut possit id sufficere ad iudicium de eorum præstantia et abundantia. Verum ne magis innotescant vel explorentur cavet diligenter et advigilat Concilium Angliæ: in quo cum aliquando fuisset propositum de fodinis in Hibernia indagandis, opposuit se acerrime quidam e primis Proceribus qui aliquando in Hibernia rebus præfuit, tanquam non expediret ullo modo statui immo salutis Angliæ ut in lucem veniret et notitiam potentioris cujuspiam nationis quanti essent a natura in fodinis Hiberniæ reconditi thesauri. De his quæcumque ego hic adduco, accepi pro certissimis partim a præfectis fodinarum in Anglia qui et Hiberniam aliquando studiose perlustrarunt, partim ab aliis qui pernoverunt intime quæcumque in Concilio Angliæ de iisdem sunt proposita."

† The Irish horses were celebrated in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Munster, in his "Cosmographia" (lib. ii.), says: "Gignit Hibernia multos equos qui graviter incedunt, studentque velut datâ opera mollem facere gressum, ne insidenti molestiam ullam inferant." Jovius also states that the Irish horses were often bestowed as presents by the nobility of France and Spain; and adds the curious fact: "ex hoc genere duodecim candoris eximii, purpura et argenteis habenis exornatos in pompa summorum pontificum sessore vacuos duci videmus."—(In lib. de Regionib. in Descript. Hiberniæ.)

"The fourth is, that no schools or academies are allowed in Ireland, the English being desirous to keep the people in ignorance, lest they should learn the difference between liberty and slavery, and knowing well that the inhabitants are warlike and courageous, and capable of supporting every fatigue, they fear lest they should be instructed in the art of war. For the same reason they never allowed artists to settle there, lest the inhabitants, by learning how to avail themselves of the natural resources of the country, might become rich and powerful, and shake off the foreign yoke; for it yields abundance of metal for every sort of armour, and for the munitions of war.

"As to the troops that will be necessary for the conquest of the kingdom, it is certain that as the eyes of England are now opened to the importance of the island, greater forces will be required than heretofore. Considering, however, the importance of the enterprize, and the increase of the Catholic faith, the expense will be but trifling; and I think that with five thousand well-armed troops, such an end may easily be attained.

"There can be no difficulty in disembarking the troops; there are so many ports in the island that it would be impossible for the enemy to occupy them all.* There are many of the Irish chieftains both in Rome and Spain, who are excellently acquainted with the country.

"As regards the good will of the inhabitants, were it merely for the motive of religion, all would unite themselves at once with any Catholic power, and still more so with the Roman pontiff.

"The queen of England is so occupied with the war in Flanders, and other wars abroad, as well as with the guerillas of the Irish chiefs at home, that it will be impossible for her to send an army to oppose the invading troops; and as to the cities which she at present occupies, the citizens, being all Catholics, will hail with delight the friendly troops, and shake off the tyrannical yoke of the English. And even should it not be so, there is not a single city in the whole kingdom which could resist for four days against a battery of four pieces of cannon. . . . In fine, the conquest being thus most easily accomplished, not only will new power and glory be obtained, but the Irish nation being the most devoted to the Holy See, the most firmly rooted in the attachment to the Catholic faith, and the greatest enemy of all heretics, especially of the English, it will be a perpetual bulwark against all the heretics of the west, and serve as a bridle to check those of England and Scotland."

* Tacitus (in Vit. Jul. Agric.) says of his time: "*Quod Hiberniæ quam Britanniæ melius aditus portusque per commercia et negotiatores cogniti.*" Peter Lombard (loc. cit. c. xi.) also writes: "*Plurimi sunt et optimi portus qui nimirum et accessum habent facilem et fidam præbent stationem adeo quidem ut in ista etiam parte Hibernia longe Britanniam superet.*"

CHAPTER IV.

PERSECUTION OF THE IRISH CATHOLICS DURING
THE REIGN OF ELIZABETH.

1. General View of this Persecution.—2. Sufferings of the Irish Church.—3. Devastation of the Country.—4. Famine which ensued.—5. Examples to Illustrate the Persecution of Elizabeth.—6. Constancy of the Irish Catholics.—7. Condition of the Protestant Church in the time of Elizabeth.

1.—*General View of the Persecution.*

FEW penal laws were enacted by the Irish parliament during the reign of Elizabeth. In its first meetings, indeed (1559), an effort was made by the government to lay the foundations of a penal code, on which an ample superstructure might subsequently be raised. Not only was spiritual supremacy, as enjoyed by Henry VIII. and Edward VI., restored to the crown, and all the acts of queen Mary in favour of the Catholic religion repealed, but it was further commanded, that all officers and ministers, whether lay or ecclesiastical, should, on pain of forfeiture, take the oath of supremacy; that all persons in any way maintaining the spiritual supremacy of the Holy See, should forfeit, for the first offence, all his estates, real and personal (or be imprisoned for one year, if not worth £20), incur a *præmunire* for the second offence, and become guilty of high treason for the third offence; that the use of the book of Common Prayer, instead of the Roman Catholic liturgy, should be enforced as in England; that any clergyman who refused to use the book of Common Prayer in his church, or who used any other form of worship, rite, ceremony, or celebration of the Lord's Supper, openly or privately, than was laid down in the said book of Common Prayer, should, for the first offence, forfeit one year's income, and be imprisoned for six months; for the second offence be deprived of office, and suffer imprisonment at pleasure; and for the third offence, be imprisoned for life; that every person should resort to the established church and attend the new

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service, under pain of ecclesiastical censures, and of the forfeiture of twelve pence for every offence, to be levied by the church-wardens, by the distress of the lands or chattels of the defaulter; that the first fruits and twentieths of all church revenues should be given to the crown, and that the old form of *congé d'élire* should be superseded by the letters patent of the crown, by which, in future, all collations to vacant sees should be made.*

It was only by a stratagem, however, that the wishes of the queen, in regard of these penal laws, received the sanction of the commons; and the promise of the viceroy that they would not be put in execution, made them for some years remain as a dead letter on the statute-book. Other enactments, embodying the cruel code that was enforced in England, were proposed in 1585; but the Catholic party in parliament was successful in its opposition, and the agents of persecution were never able to palliate their cruelty, by appealing to the acts of the Irish legislature.

Some English writers dwell with complacency on this lenity of the government, and extol the mildness with which the new religion was sought to be enforced in Ireland; and whilst they acknowledge that torrents of blood were poured out in England by the intolerant bigotry of Elizabeth, they have not hesitated to affirm, that Ireland was wholly free from such scenes of persecution, and that our Catholics were allowed peaceably to pursue the dictates of their own conscience. And yet, whosoever impartially considers the contemporary monuments of our history, must be convinced, that a bitter unremitted persecution was at this period carried on in Ireland against the Catholic faith; that the agents of the government pursued, in regard of the Irish Catholics, the same sanguinary code which had been enacted in England; and that every torture which their malicious ingenuity could devise, was inflicted with impunity on the natives of our island.

One of the most learned men to whom Ireland gave birth in the sixteenth century, was Peter Lombard, archbishop of Armagh.

* Liber Mun. Hib. statut. 1 Elizab. chap. i. 2. This act of parliament is given in full, with interesting notes, in the "Analecta" of Dr. Roothe, the learned bishop of Ossory.

Educated in his early youth at Oxford, he ever cherished a warm sympathy for the English nation, which he more than once takes occasion to eulogize in his celebrated "*Commentarius de Regno Hiberniæ*." This work was written in the year 1600, and we adopt the following calm and unimpassioned words with which it sketches the ordeal of persecutions to which our country was subjected during Elizabeth's reign:—

"I shall present (he says), arranged under certain heads, a sketch of the persecution which was begun, indeed, under Henry the Eighth, was continued under Edward the Sixth, but raged with special fury under Elizabeth; for during her reign, whatsoever means could be devised to seduce the Irish Catholics from the faith and their allegiance to the Apostolic See, whether by force or fraud, by threats of torments or the seductions of the world, were eagerly carried into execution.

1. "And, first, as to the sanctuary and the ornaments of religion: no country was more enriched with noble monasteries, many of which were opulent, and able, at all times, to give meet hospitality to the richest noblemen of the island. These, wheresoever the sway of the English monarchy extended, were plundered and destroyed; their property, whether sacred or domestic, was pillaged and dissipated; their revenues were seized by the crown, and the sites themselves were either abandoned to ruin or applied to profane purposes. The same, indeed, must also be said of many of the Catholic churches, whilst in others, the sacred worship of God being abolished, and the monuments and relics of Christ and His saints being desecrated, the schismatical and heretical rites were introduced.

2. "As to persons: it was first prescribed and commanded, that all who were assumed to public offices should take the oath of abjuration, which was drawn up through hatred of the Apostolic See, and declared that supreme power and authority, as well in spirituals as in temporals, in Ireland as in England, belonged to the aforesaid kings of England, as heads of the church. Should any, through unwillingness to take this oath, decline such offices and honours, they, by the very fact, incurred the royal displeasure. And should it happen, as it often indeed occurs, that this oath was tendered to individuals for the purpose of testing their faith, by refusing it, they incurred the penalties of high treason.

3. "As it was well known that the Irish revered men of learning and eloquence, it was resolved, the more effectually to inculcate the royal tenets, to send to Ireland those ministers who were most distinguished in England and Scotland for their ability and eloquence. Such were Goodman, the leader of the Calvinists in England, who, moreover, during Mary's reign had published a treatise against female government; Cartwright, distinguished amongst the Puritans; Jansons, famed for his preaching; Burchley, so zealous in preaching, that besides his sermon on the Lord's day, he also added every week two catechetical

discourses; Brady, a bishop of the Anglican tenets; Meade, known for the vehemence of his sermons; Craik, a Scotchman, made bishop of Kildare, also a famous preacher, etc.

4. "In various parts of the island there were excellent literary schools, the rectors or masters of which being Catholics, instructed the youth not only in science, but also in Catholic doctrine and morality; in some, too, there was a class of exposition of the Catholic catechism: now, all these schools, under various pretexts, are subjected to vexation and oppression, and most of them have been wholly swept away.

5. "To provide instruction for the natives, and to display a greater earnestness in its regard than had hitherto been shown (for often had the erection of an university been in vain solicited from the crown), a most ample and splendid college was erected a few years ago in the vicinity of Dublin, by royal decree, but at the expense of the inhabitants, in which it is commanded that all liberal arts shall be taught by heretical teachers. As such heretical masters, however, could not be found in Ireland, they were sent thither from England; and the better to establish and propagate their teaching, they received the mission to preach the evangelical doctrines in Dublin, and were directed, moreover, to exact the oath of the queen's supremacy, in all ecclesiastical matters, from the students whom they should educate.

6. "That they might the more freely persecute the Catholics, as if, not for religion's sake, but for the violation of the civil laws, some statutes were enacted, not indeed in Ireland, but in the parliament of England, so full of cruelty and folly, that the mere practices of Catholic piety are declared to be civil and capital crimes, and some of them, too, equivalent to high treason; for instance, to celebrate or assist at the adorable sacrifice of the altar—to refuse to assist at the schismatical and heretical rites—to have in your possession or be bearers of missals, breviaries, offices of the Blessed Virgin, agnus Deis, crosses, beads, medals blessed by the Roman pontiff—to make a confession of sins, or to absolve from them—and especially to reconcile anyone to the Catholic Church. Forsooth, our English legislators imitated in this the princes and satraps of the Medes and Persians, who being desirous to achieve the ruin of Daniel, and seeing that they could find no pretext except in his observance of the law of God, devised a royal statute, which enacted that anyone found praying to any God or man, except the king, should be cast into the lion's den.

Although these laws and statutes were not only not received but were even rejected in the Irish parliament, still oftentimes were they carried into execution with far more unbridled cruelty in Ireland than in England;* and those members of the clergy or laity who conciliated the

* Ranke cites a contemporary Italian discourse on Ireland, in which the government of Elizabeth in that country is described as most tyrannical, "as she abandoned it to the care of ministers who, to ensure their own aggrandizement, employed every art, no matter how tyrannical, and sought to maintain wars and dissensions amongst the natives themselves." In the *Codex Urbinus*,

popular reverence and esteem by their learning, piety, orders, dignity, rank, and virtue, were persecuted with imprisonment, torture, and most cruel deaths; which sufferings of our people, were they made known to the world (and in his own good time God will surely make them known), it would at once be seen how our island is not only adorned with the early glory of its confessors, but is still more decorated by the heroic fortitude of its martyrs."

But whilst the emissaries of Elizabeth thus revelled in every excess against the Catholics of our island, the government itself cannot be reputed blameless: in fact, it not only* co-operated with them in their guilt, but, moreover, spurred them on to the most cruel deeds of Vandalism and persecution. The commissioners who a few years later presented to James I. the remonstrance of the Irish Catholics, expressly laid the blame of all their sufferings at the door of Elizabeth;† and, indeed, the proclamation of the queen, signed the 18th of October, 1591, is more than sufficient to justify their accusations.‡ One of the articles of this proclamation commanded all the natives of Ireland

Vat. Libr. 854, pag. 231, there is a "Discorso sopra l'Inghilterra," in which we read "Il rammemorare gli atti empj et crudeli da lei usati contro la vera religione et contro i ministri di quella et contro i seguaci non si può far senza spargere lagrime o senza eccitarle in altri."

* The cruelty of the English agents was well known at the court; and Elizabeth herself was on one occasion heard to say, that she feared the same reproach, on account of the disorders in Ireland, which had been formerly made by Bato to Tiberius—"It is you, you! that are to blame for these disorders; who have committed your flocks, not to shepherds, but to wolves."—*Hibernia Pacata*.

† See this remonstrance in full in O'Sullivan, loc. cit. pag. 317, seqq.

‡ Carve, a coeval writer, thus describes the cruel rage of Elizabeth against the Catholics:—"Sine mora certos commissarios destinavit ad omnia cœnobia a Maria Regina viris Ecclesiasticis concessa supprimenda: insuper omnes imagines ex Ecclesiis ejici imperavit, omnes quoque Catholicam fidem profitentes vel eidem addictos acerbissimis tormentis enecari: nec minori atrocitate et conamine in Hibernia gessit, omnem politiam, civilitatem, urbanitatem ablegando, omnia sacra profanando," etc.—(*Lyra*, pag. 117.) This writer was born in 1590, and studied at P. White's school in Kilkenny. He frequently commemorates "immanem Elizabethæ in Catholicos Hiberniæ persecutionem et tyrannidem;" "execrandam hæreticorum sævitiam;" "sacerdotes ac religiosos ad nefandas ac immanes neces rapi," etc.—(pag. 121, et seqq.) In "Ireland's Case Briefly Stated," printed in 1695, pag. 7, we read—"The Spanish cloud (the armada) was no sooner dispersed, than Q. Elizabeth resolved to fall upon the Irish with all the severity imaginable, in order to force her pretended reformation upon them. First, she prosecuted some on pretence of having relieved a few Spaniards cast by stress of weather upon the coast of Ireland; then she ordered others to be seized on for having harboured Catholic bishops, priests, and friars; and a great many more were questioned for having been at Mass, or not come to the Protestant meetings, as they were enjoined by the said pretended acts of parliament."

to make a return to the government of the priests and religious who within fourteen months had visited their houses; whilst another enacted the penalties of high treason against all who for the future should be found to harbour or relieve them.* The proclamation was accompanied with a series of secret instructions, communicating full inquisitorial powers to the ecclesiastical commissioners to search out, and punish with the utmost rigour, all who should attempt to violate its enactments.†

We have seen how, under various pretences, Catholic schools were proscribed throughout our island. From other sources we further learn, that the newly-appointed Protestant bishops received special orders to carry out that scheme, and to found heretical schools in their respective districts.‡ A little later this system of proselytism attained its perfection, when parents were commanded to send their children to these schools, under pain of forfeiture of their property and other severe penalties.§

It is to the same unprincipled schemes of persecution that we are indebted for the destruction of most of the monumental records of our history. Dr. Lynch, in his "*Cambrensis Eversus*," attests that "the English laboured with Vandal earnestness in plundering our Irish documents;"|| and again he writes: "It is a fact well authenticated by the testimony of the last generation, that while Ireland was wasted by the flames of war, the queen's troops, wherever they were quartered through the country, rifled the houses of friends and foes indiscriminately, and carried off all Irish manuscripts; it was not through any fancy of their own that they did so, but they seem to have had orders to that effect; and when these soldiers were called in to garrison the towns, large leaves of these manuscripts were distributed by them to schoolboys to make covers for their books, or cut up in the tailor's shop to make measures for clothes."¶ Dr. David Roothe, writing in 1614, is equally explicit in attesting this Vandalism of the English governors: "if any members of the government," he says, "received intelli-

* The proclamation is given by Dominick de Rosario, loc. cit. pag. 144-8.

† See Appendix to Dom. de Rosario, loc. cit. pag. 235, seqq.

‡ "*Irish Statutes*," p. 346, 12 Eliz. c. i.

§ See Hardiman, "*Iar-Connaught*," pag. 420.

|| Vol. i. page 335, edited by Celtic Society in 1849.

¶ Ibid. page 337.

gence of a fragment of manuscript history being in the possession of a private individual, it was at once either begged or bought; but if neither money nor entreaty was strong enough to obtain it, then threats and commands immediately followed, which it would imperil one's life to resist. . . . Far the most active in this trade of hunting out in all quarters, and carrying away or destroying ancient books, especially in the province of Munster, of which he was president, was sir George Carew. He took from the noble family of the M'Carthys a most ancient manuscript volume. But the course pursued by this president in one province, had been already adopted throughout Ireland by sir Henry Sydney and preceding governors, who swept away in one mass everything that they could lay hands on; so that one of their most special instructions, when deputed to govern this island, would appear to have been, to annihilate with the most unsparing hand every monument of the history of Ireland."*

2.—*Sufferings of the Irish Catholics under Elizabeth.*

The statutes of 1559 were not destined to remain very long a dead letter; and one of their first fruits was witnessed in 1563, when the earl of Essex, the then viceroy, issued a proclamation,† by which all priests, secular and regular, were interdicted either to hold assemblies or to take up their abode in the city of Dublin. This proclamation was further accompanied with a republication of the former edict, by which various fines and penalties (as mentioned above) were enacted against those who, on Sundays and festival days, should absent themselves from the Protestant service; and, as Ware informs us, these fines were exacted with the greatest rigour.

The priests and religious—the shepherds of the flock—were, as it was natural to expect, the first to experience the fury of the storm. Wheresoever the English agents penetrated, the clergy had to fly for safety to the mountain recesses; the churches were desecrated, and the altars overthrown; and those hypocritical reformers (to use the words of Leland), “under pretence of obeying the order of the state, seized on all the

* “*Analecta*,” pag. 557-9.

† Ware's *Annals of Eliz.*, an. 1563.

most valuable furniture of the churches, which they exposed to sale without decency or reserve."* A few instances of the desecration of holy places will suffice. In 1595, the governor of Sligo, George Bingham, setting sail around Tyrconnell, entered Lough Swilly and plundered the defenceless nuns of the Carmelite convent of Rathmullan, which was situated on the banks of the lake, and was known as St. Mary's Abbey; the ruthless despoiler carried off the vestments, chalices, and other valuable articles of the abbey.† In the following year the convent of Kilconnell, belonging to the Franciscans, was made a barrack for the English soldiers; the church became a stable for their cavalry; and the very tombs were rifled by the soldiery, who hoped to find some treasure concealed there.‡ A few years earlier, the Franciscan monastery and church of Kilchree were also pillaged: the statues and paintings were demolished; the sacred utensils were broken to pieces and carried off: and the annalist of the order especially laments the destruction of a rich figure of the crucifixion, exquisitely worked and adorned with beautiful medallions of the Evangelists, which were wrought in silver and gold. At the same time a body of English soldiers entered the church of Timoleague, and not content with demolishing the stained glass windows which adorned it, tore to flitters the pictures for which the church was famed: the people entreated and prayed to have them preserved, but all was in vain, for destruction had been vowed against all the monuments of Catholic piety and devotion. In like manner, the monastery of Multifarnam was burned to the ground; and when re-built, plundered a second time by the heretical troops. The convent of Donegal, however, was particularly remarkable for the richness of its sacred ornaments: "In the year 1600 (writes Mooney) there were forty friars in that house; and the divine praises were celebrated with solemn chant by night and by day. I myself was sacristan, and I had entrusted to my charge forty suits of vestments, many of them of cloth of gold and silver—some interwoven and brocaded with gold—all the remainder silk. There were also sixteen

* Hist., vol. ii. pag. 274.

† Miscellany of Celtic Society for 1849, edited by O'Donovan, pag. 223.

‡ Mooney's Hist., MS., of the Franc. Ord.

large silver chalices, all of which, two only excepted, were washed with gold; nor should I forget two rich ciboriums for the Blessed Sacrament, which were inlaid with precious stones.* This far-famed monastery, however, soon became a garrison of the English soldiery;† the entire of the sacred furniture was seized on by Lambert, the governor of Connaught; the chalices were profanely used as drinking cups, and the rich vestments were torn into shreds and employed for the profanest uses.‡ But it is not necessary to pursue these individual instances.

"Everywhere," writes Henriquez, "the heretics profaned the sacred churches, demolished the altars, consigned to the flames the holy images, and devoted to profane purposes the chalices and other ornaments of divine worship. Not a day passed without being marked by some cruel martyrdom: the nobles were despoiled of their wealth and possessions; the poor overwhelmed with affliction; the natives banished into foreign lands; the priests were compelled to wander about from place to place, or were thrown into prison. The religious dared not to appear in public, and no one could attempt to preach the Catholic faith or defend the supremacy of the Holy See. It was not sufficient for the enemies of our faith to persecute the Catholics in the cities and towns, they followed them moreover to the woods and mountains, like hungry lions pursuing the flock of Christ. Their diabolical cruelty was still more displayed in the destruction of the numerous and richly-adorned monasteries, which the munificence of the nobility had erected and endowed in former times, that their inmates might devote themselves wholly to the praises and service of God; but the heretics pulled down the churches, destroyed the edifices by fire, murdered the servants of God, profaned the sacred places, and made the houses of prayer become dens of thieves. They were earthly paradises—they now became the abode of demons; for the voice of prayer was substituted blasphemy, and instead of the daily sacrifice of thanksgiving, nought was witnessed but abominations and crimes."

He then particularizes the sufferings to which his own Cistercian Order was subjected—

"Some," he says, "full of affliction and misery, fled from the sword which impended over them; others were murdered or burnt

* MS. Hist. loc. cit.

† Soon after the powder magazine exploded, blowing to atoms many hundreds of the garrison, and completing the ruin of both convent and church.—Ibid; and also the Annals of the Four Masters ad. an. 1601; O'Sullev. Hist. Cath. pag. 221.

‡ "Supellex illa fuit prædæ Olivero Lamberto gubernatori Connacæ ex parte hæreticorum qui calices in cyphos profanos convertit et vestes sacras in diversos profanos usus convertendos scindi et dilacerari curavit."—Mooney, loc. cit.

to death in their convents; all the monasteries were levelled to the ground; the virgins who, from their youth, had consecrated themselves to God, were driven from their convents, and compelled to wander in hunger through the woods and mountains. The heretics were the more eager in the pursuit of our religious, as our monasteries were numerous and rich; and in a short time all were completely destroyed.*

The same writer gives an extract from a letter addressed to himself by an Irish exile, from Compostella, the 3rd of April, 1617, describing the persecution to which the Cistercian fathers had been subjected in Elizabeth's reign:—

“Whilst the diabolical rage of the heretics destroyed the churches and monasteries, and profaned them with sacrilegious hands, the constancy of the Cistercians, in offering up their lives for Christ's sake, was most remarkable, and deserving of all praise; and as many of their sacred houses were scattered through the country, so innumerable monks of that order, by martyrdom, attained their heavenly crown.”†

It would not be difficult to multiply these extracts from coeval writers, who, without a dissentient voice, agree in attesting the rigour of the persecution waged against the Irish priesthood. We shall be content, however, with one passage

* Henriquez, p. 358 :—“*Templa profanabant hæretici, altaria demoliebantur, sanctorum imagines comburebant, et calices, et ornamenta cultui divino dicata profanis usibus applicabant. Nullus abibat dies quo aliquem martyrio non afficerent, nobiles divitiis et possessionibus spoliando, pauperes affligendo, et incolas in exilium ablegando. Sacerdotes sedem mutarant et fugerant vel carceribus mancipati erant. Religiosi in nullius conspectum venire audebant, denique nullus fere erat qui Catholicam fidem profiteri auderet et summi Pontificis auctoritatem propugnaret. Non satis erat fidei inimicis se Catholicos in urbibus persecutos esse, nisi et in desertis et vagis montibus ut famelici leones inquirerent oves Christi. Deinde diabolicam suam crudelitatem etiam in multis et sumptuosis monasteriis ostenderunt quæ Principes in regno illo dum Religio vigeret, extruxerant, et Catholici dotarant ut in eis diversarum religionum et institutorum Religiosi Deum laudarent et servirent. Evertabant templa, exurebant ædificia, servos Dei trucidabant, et profanabant loca sacra, et domus orationis in speluncas latronum commutabant: paradisi illi terrestres fiunt inferni, voces laudationis in blasphemias vertuntur, et in locum sacrificiorum quæ quotidie offerebantur succedebant abominationes et peccata.*”

... “*Aliqui gladium qui eis minabatur fugiebant dolorum et miseriarum pleni: aliqui trucidabantur et comburebantur, omnia monasteria solo æquabantur. Virgines quæ ab ineunte ætate se Deo voverant claustra relinquentes per devia vagabantur et montes et valles absconditas petebant. Hæretici tanto magis rabiem in monasteria nostra ostenderunt, quo erant plura numero et ditiora et brevi tempore fere diruerunt.*”

† Henriquez, loc. cit. :—“*Dum in principio maledicti schismatis, perfida et diabolica hæreticorum furia templa et monasteria erueret et sacrilega manu profanaret, notabilis fuit semperque laudanda eorum constantia in vitæ pro Christo amissione. Et quia multæ hujus ordinis sacræ ædes reperiebantur, innumeri quoque monachi martyrio celestem arcem petiere.*”

from the famous Dominican writer Dominick de Rosario, who thus addresses his Catholic countrymen:—

“Your religion made your enemies crucify you. Divesting themselves of humanity, and disregarding God’s anger, the rage of these heretics (who may be likened to famished lions) exhausted itself on our holy edifices. The priests of the Lord were stoned in the public thoroughfares, and their tonsured heads were made targets for those wretches to aim at. Some of these priests had their brains beaten out, their bodies dashed to earth, trodden under foot, and bruised by kicks and blows. Some had the nails of their fingers torn out by the roots, whilst others actually saw their entrails protrude and their flesh ripped and torn by combs of iron. How shall I describe such scenes? *They were stoned—they were cut asunder—they were tempted—they were put to death by the sword.* But, praised be God! they were true to their faith. These persecutors excelled in malice—their cruelty surpassed its ordinary character, and their ferocity shrank not from the most appalling crimes.”*

He then adds several instances, some of which we shall have occasion to refer to in a subsequent article.

Florimond Raimond, writing in France in the beginning of the seventeenth century, gives many details of the sufferings of our Catholics, which he had received, he says, “from forty Irish priests, who at that time (1600) had been exiled for the faith, and landed at Bourdeaux.” Eight years earlier (1592), Ware tells us that “eleven priests and Jesuits were seized in Connaught and Munster and brought up to Dublin;” of only one of them, Rev. Michael Fitzsimmons, the son of an alderman of Dublin, is the martyrdom recorded by this Protestant annalist; we can have, however, but little doubt as to the fate of the other ten. The names of many of these worthy confessors are preserved to us by Curry, in his “Review of the Civil Wars in Ireland.” In the reign of Elizabeth, he writes:—

“Among many other Roman Catholic bishops and priests, there were put to death for the exercise of their function in Ireland, Glaby O’Boyle, abbot of Boyle, of the diocese of Elphin, and Owen O’Mulkeren, abbot of the monastery of the Holy Trinity, in that diocese, hanged and quartered by lord Gray, in 1580; John Stephens, for saying Mass for Teague MacHugh, was hanged and quartered by lord Burroughs, in

* “The Geraldines,” printed originally in 1655, translated by Rev. C. P. Meehan, and reprinted in 1847, Dublin, Duffy, pag. 138.

1597; Thady O'Boyle, guardian of the monastery of Donegal, was slain by the English in his own monastery; six friars were slain in the monastery of Moynihigan; John O'Calyhor and Bryan O'Trevor, of the order of St. Bernard, were slain in their own monastery, de Sancta Maria, in Ulster; as also, Felimy O'Hara, a lay-brother; so was Eneas Penny, parish priest of Killagh, slain at the altar, in his parish church there; Cahall McGoran, Rory O'Donellan, Peter O'Quillan, Patrick O'Kenna, George Power, vicar-general of the diocese of Ossory; Andrew Stritch, of Limerick, Bryan O'Muirhirtagh, vicar-general of the diocese of Clonfert; Dorohow O'Molony of Thomond, John Kelly of Louth, Stephen Patrick of Annaly, John Pillis, friar, Rory McHenlen, Tirrilagh McInisky, a lay brother. All those that come after Eneas Penny, together with Walter Farnan, priest, died in the castle of Dublin, either through hard usage and restraint, or the violence of torture."*

All these outrages of the government and its agents were well condensed by the heroic chieftain of Tirconnell, when, having arrested an English captain named Willis, he set him at liberty, desiring him to acquaint Elizabeth that "her emissaries in Ireland acted iniquitously towards the natives: seeking impiously to corrupt the Catholic faith—torturing with barbarous and inhuman cruelty our sacred bishops and priests—imprisoning and cutting off without mercy the Catholic nobility—in fine, substituting everywhere iniquity for the rule of justice."† The same motives impelled the Leinster chiefs to appeal to arms; "they could no longer endure," says O'Sullivan, "that the sacrifice of the Mass and the holy Sacraments were interdicted to them—that their priests were proscribed, and cast into prison or led to execution—that their churches were contaminated by heretical rites, and they themselves subjected to an incessant persecution."‡

We might suppose that Dr. Adam Loftus, Protestant archbishop of Armagh, should at least, as minister of the Gospel, be exempt from the common contagion of persecuting fury; and yet, during the whole forty years that he enjoyed the richest benefices of our island, he was a main stimulus to English bigotry, ever seeking for new penal enactments against the Catholic faith. In his first report to the queen, dated May the 17th, 1565, after describing the nobility of the pale as all

* See O'Connell's *Memoirs*, etc., p. 127-8.

† O'Sullivan's *Hist. Cath.* p. 156.

‡ *Ibid.* p. 111.

devoted to the ancient creed, he adds: "Whereupon I was once in mind (for that they be so linked together in friendship and alliance, one with another, that we shall never be able to correct them by the ordinary course of the statute) to come upon every one of them with a good round fine and sum of money, to be paid to your majesty's use, and to bind them in sure bonds and recognisances ever hereafter dutifully to observe your majesty's most godly laws and injunctions. But . . . I thought fit not to deal any further with them until your majesty's pleasure was therein specially known, which I humbly crave, with as much expedition as conveniently may be. And verily, in my opinion, if they were once brought to some good order and dutiful obedience to your majesty's laws, and, indeed, somewhat sharply dealt withal now, it should be no small furtherance to your majesty's proceedings, and their example should be a great cause to bring the rest and meaner sort to a godly reformation."*

Twenty-five eventful years rolled on; Dr. Loftus had been, at his own request, translated from Armagh to Dublin, and many of the highest offices of the state had been entrusted to him; nevertheless, his spirit of intolerance and bigotry remained unchanged. In the State Paper Office is preserved a letter which he addressed, on 22nd of September, 1590, to lord Burghley, detailing (as is endorsed on the letter itself) "the causes of the general decay" of the Protestant religion in Ireland, and "how the same may be remedied." Most pitiful, indeed, are the laments which he pours out for the wide-spread abandonment of the Protestant tenets; and, in conclusion, he suggests: "It may be easily remedied, without any danger, and with great gain to her majesty, if the ecclesiastical commission be put in force; for this people are but poor, and fear to be fined; if liberty be left to myself and such commissioners as are well affected in religion, to imprison and fine all such as are obstinate and disobedient, and if they persist, being men of ability to bear their own expenses, to send them into England, for example's sake, I have no doubt but within a short time they will be reduced to good conformity. If it be objected that

* Shirley, "Original Letters," etc., p. 194, seqq.

this severe course may perhaps breed some stirs, I assure your lordship there is no dread of any such matter, for they are but beggars, and if once they perceive a thorough resolution to deal roundly with them, they will both yield and conform themselves; and this course of reformation, the sooner it is begun the better it will prosper; and the longer it is deferred, the more dangerous it will be.* Seven years later he counsels, indeed, peace and lenity; for the judgment of God had fallen on the heretical soldiery, and yet whilst communicating this counsel, he betrays his truculent spirit, and how his only aim was to compass the destruction of our country: "The captains die," he writes, "the soldiers die,† the army daily groweth weaker; treasure, victuals, and munition are consumed; the rebels are increased and grown insolent. . . . I see no other course for this cursed country but pacification, until hereafter when the fury is passed, *her majesty may with more convenience correct the heads of these traitors.*"‡

Dr. Loftus, however, was not the only member of the Protestant episcopate who displayed this excess of persecuting bigotry. The bishop of Ferns imitated his example: "he assailed the church dedicated to St. John the Baptist in the town of Caislean Ilisi (writes O'Sullivan Beare), and having despoiled the statues of the Blessed Virgin and St. John, which were there held in high veneration by the people, of all their rich offerings and ornaments, he caused them to be pulled down from the altar by his English satellites. Not satisfied with this, he resolved to have severe penalties inflicted on the Irish Catholics who refused to aid him in this impious enterprise. But before he could execute this design, he himself paid the penalty of his wickedness: being seized with violent pains, and raging as a madman, he beat his huge body against the ground, till death completed his sufferings."—*Hist. Cath.* pag. 138.

Matthew Sheyn, the reformed bishop of Cork, was also remarkable for his ferocity, and amongst his other deeds, it is

* From State Paper Office.

† This statement is repeated by O'Sullivan, p. 178: "*Armachæ præsidium, ingens pediculorum vis rodet, plagaque multos extinguit, neque diu post fames invadit.*"

‡ Letter of 18th October, 1597, in State Paper Office.

recorded, that in 1578 he caused the statue of St. Dominick, which was held in high veneration by the citizens of Cork, to be thrown down, and contemptuously dragged through the streets, and then burned in "the high cross" of the city.*

Sir John Perrot has justly been styled one of the most mild and lenient of the lord deputies at this period; and the favor which he showed the Irish Catholics was one of the chief accusations that subsequently led him to the tower. And yet, many of sir John's deeds shared the fanatical spirit of persecution which then prevailed. Thus we find it recorded by his panegyrist, that his troop having pursued a party of the natives, he cut off fifty heads, and bringing them home in triumph, arranged them as a trophy around the cross, in the square of Kilmallock.† In his "last will and testament," written in prison, after sentence of death being passed against him, he declares that "he abhors the Mass," and calls God to witness that he "never favored friars or such kind of vermin; but suppressed more monasteries and friars during his government of the land of Ireland, than was done by all the governors before in thirty years."‡ Earlier in his career (1582), when desired by her majesty to make a statement as to the best means of subduing the natives, he replied, that "as St. Patrick was more familiar with the people generally than Christ, he proposed that the reformation should begin from God, that friars, monks, Jesuits, priests, nuns, and such like vermin, who openly uphold the papacy, should be executed by martial law."§ Such were the principles that guided this merciful viceroy; and yet, so lenient was his administration in comparison with that of the other agents of the crown, that all classes of the nation viewed as a calamity his removal from amongst them, and in crowds accompanied him to the sea-shore.||

There were, however, many agents of the English crown to whom religious bigotry only served as a cloak for their rapacity

* Smith "The ancient and present state of the county and city of Cork," vol. ii. pag. 50.

† "The History of sir John Perrott," written about the close of Elizabeth's reign, and printed from the original MS. in London, 1728, pag. 52. A rare and valuable tract for the history of that period.

‡ Ibid. Append. vi. pag. 311.

§ "Government of Ireland under sir John Perrot," lett. to the queen, pag. 4.

|| Ibid. ; also Annals of the Four Masters, etc.

and corruption, and they saw in the royal supremacy the shortest road to wealth, as it justified, in the eyes of the law, the plunder of the Irish Catholics, and the confiscation of their property. "The penal laws of Protestants," writes the learned archbishop of Dublin, Dr. Peter Talbot, "are written with bloody characters; all their courts are stained with the innocent and noble blood of many learned and loyal subjects, only because they would not take an oath against their conscience, and abjure the faith of their Christian ancestors. . . . The oaths of *supremacy*, *allegiance*, and *abjuration*, are like so many nets cast out by Protestants to fish estates in troubled consciences—a far different method from that of the apostles, who were fishers of men and not of estates."* And he again speaks of the cruelties thus perpetrated "by public magistrates, under the color of law and pretext of peace of the land; the starving and racking of so many innocent, worthy, learned persons; the tearing out of hearts and bowels in the public view, upon suborned testimonies of base, vagabond, perjured catchpoles, hired to swear what they and their hirers knew to be false, and all the world saw to be void of all signs of truth."†

The viceroy Fitzwilliam, was, amongst others, remarkable for his rapacity and cruelty. He farmed out the shires and captaincies to the highest bidders; and these, in return, seized on the natives with impunity, demanding large sums or tracts of land for their ransom, and when this was refused, the usual *revenge* was, to torture the prisoners by frying the soles of their feet in seething butter and brimstone. One of those who fled from this tyranny of Fitzwilliam, was Bryan na Murtha O'Rorke, a northern chieftain, remarkable for the comeliness of his person, as well as for the firmness and nobility of his demeanour.‡ He took refuge with king James in Scotland, but was soon after treacherously surrendered to Elizabeth: he understood no English, and his only petition to the queen was, that he might be executed after the Irish fashion. When led to the scaffold, the apostate archbishop of Cashel, Miler Magrath, was sent to induce him to

* "The Politician's Catechism," chap. x., printed at Antwerp, in 1658.

† Ibid. pag. 95.

‡ See for the facts here stated, and many other particulars regarding this heroic chieftain, O'Donovan's "Four Masters," vol. vi pag. 197.

conform to the established creed; but in reply, the heroic chieftain reprov'd Magrath for his vile apostacy, and told him to take a lesson from his fortitude, and return to the bosom of the holy Catholic Church.

A curious declaration of the government of Ireland, presented by captain Lee to the queen in 1594, details many instances of the cruel excesses thus committed against the natives; one will suffice for us: "It is well proved that in one of your majesty's shires, there lived an Irishman peaceably and quietly, as a good subject, many years together, whereby he grew unto great wealth; which his landlord thirsting after, and desirous to move him from his land, entered into practice with the sheriff of the shire to despatch this simple man, and divide his goods between them; they sent one of his own servants for him, and he coming with his servant, they presently took his man, who was their messenger, and hanged him; and keeping the master prisoner, went immediately to his dwelling and shared his substance between them, turning his wife and many children to begging. They then carried him to the castle of Dublin, where he lay by for two or three terms, and having no matter objected against him whereupon to be tried by law, they, by their credit and countenance, being both English gentlemen, informed the lord deputy so hardly of him, as that without indictment or trial they executed him."* He then gives several other similar instances of barbarity, and adds: "These principal instruments, as the lord deputy and they who have been his assistants in these dishonest practices, have not only used these bad means against those poor remote and savage people, but have done all their endeavour to discomfort and discredit your majesty's best servitors. . . I fear that they who liked that hard course, and have been practicers of the same, will inform your majesty that those people are so bad as it is no matter of conscience to cut them off any way howsoever."

This contemporary officer also refers to the massacre of Mulaghmast, for which it would be difficult to seek a parallel, even

* The original of this tract is preserved in Trinity College, Dublin; it is printed in "*Desiderata curiosa Hibernica*," vol. ii. p. 91; also in appendix to Dr. Curry's "*Civil Wars in Ireland*;" and again in "*Historical Memoirs*," by the same author, append. 33rd. p. 265, seqq.

in the annals of Indian warfare. The chief families of Leix and Offaly were invited in the queen's name to assemble there, and about four hundred obeyed the summons.* Francis Cosby and Robert Hartpool were the English officers in command,† and no sooner were the natives assembled in the great rath, than they were encompassed by a treble line of the government soldiers, and the slopes of Mullaghmast soon streamed with their blood. Not even to one was mercy shown; and this atrocious deed was perpetrated with the cognizance and approval of the viceroy.‡

It seemed to be a matter of strife amongst the English officers who should exceed in barbarity and cruelty. We have already seen the arts to which Fitzwilliam's agents had recourse. Of another it is recorded that he tied his victim to a may-pole, and then punched out his eyes with his thumbs.§ Others made it their sport to catch infants on the point of their swords and whirl them in the air.|| But, perhaps, the palm of savage barbarity should be awarded to Cosby, of whom we have just now spoken, and whose heartless cruelty is thus commemorated by O'Sullivan Beare: "Francis Cosby, the deputy of Leix, with his son Alexander, raged with indescribable fury against the Catholics of every class. . . He resided mostly in Stradbally. In front of his house there grew a tree remarkable for its height and wide-spreading branches. From these branches it was his amusement to hang up, without any crime being imputed to them, not only men, but women and children; and he was accustomed to manifest special delight when, whilst the mothers were being strangled, their infant babes were hanged from their long-flowing locks."¶ Oh! well had Hallam reason to remark, that the sufferings of our country "had never been surpassed," not even

* Donovan's "Four Masters," vol. v. pp. 1695-6.

† "Annals" of Dowling, the contemporary Protestant chancellor of Leighlin, ad. an. 1577.

‡ See the authorities just cited. Captain Lee especially commemorates the last-mentioned fact: "This hath been by the consent and practice of the lord deputy for the time being."—"Brief Declaration", etc, p. 267; see also O'Sullivan Beare, "Hist. Cath. Compend.," p. 99.

§ Despatch of Calthorpe, the attorney-general, on 28th of March, 1598, St. Pap. Office, London.

|| O'Sullivan Beare, "Hist. Cath." pag. 238.

¶ "Cum ex arbore feminae laqueo strangulatæ dimittebantur, et simul ex feminarum longo crine infantes liberi pendebant, animo capiebat incredibilem voluptatem."—Hist. Cath. pag. 99.

by those of the Jews in their destruction by Titus. Our own great Dominican, father Dominic a Rosario, exclaims: "This far-famed English queen has grown drunk on the blood of Christ's martyrs; and, like a tigress, she has hunted down our Irish Catholics, exceeding in ferocity and wanton cruelty the emperors of pagan Rome;"* and subsequently, after commemorating the sufferings and torture to which English Catholics were subjected, he adds: "But in Ireland the harvest of persecution was still more abundant than in England, and God alone can enumerate the number of martyrs whose blood was shed."†

Some, perhaps, may suppose that these excesses were more the effect of military law than of religious animosity. Yet it was far otherwise. Love for the faith of their fathers was a main motive which impelled the Irish natives to appeal to arms,—and hatred of that same Catholic faith mainly contributed to steel the hearts of the heretical enemy, and impel them to unheard-of deeds of barbarism. When the earl of Desmond was preparing for war in 1580, he thus addressed his soldiers: "Our rulers, ever since they renounced the Catholic religion, scorned to regard the nobles of this land, who have remained true to their faith Before heaven, we are trampled on by a gang of mailed marauders who hold us in contempt. Look to the sacred order of our priesthood; is it not despised by those innovators, who have come amongst us to plunder and banish the rightful owners from their time-hallowed possessions Rights are despised, and liberty is a mere catch-word; the military command is committed to adventurers; the civil administration is in the hands of spies, hirelings, and defamers; but what is most deplorable of all, we are denied the right of practising and professing our religion openly. Heresy is making

* "Hist. of the Geraldines," part 2nd, pag. 150.

† "Hist. of the Geraldines," part 2nd, pag. 159. Dr. Lombard, after citing, in the words of Giraldus Cambrensis, the well-known reply of the archbishop of Cashel as to Irish martyrs, adds: "Quod idipsum responsum esset etiam propheticum de hoc tempore; siquidem Hibernia ut ita sit quod olim non alios habuerit suæ gentis martyres quam qui in externis passi regionibus tamen postremis hisce temporibus cum in Anglia tum in Hibernia pro confessione Catholice fidei, et sedis Apostolicæ defendenda auctoritate Hiberni complures mortem sunt perpassi; quorum uti in martyrio præcipua ætatis hujus probata fuit patientia et constantia, ita et post mortem, illorum prima gloria miraculis scitur confirmata; quod ab aliis, vel alias, ut Deus volet, latius declarabitur"—Comment. cap. 20, in fine.

rapid encroachments, and we are called upon to do homage to those base-born churls who, in the queen's name, mock and spurn us." Twenty years later, the next who bore the honoured title of earl of Desmond thus wrote to the king of Spain: "We are of long time oppressed by the English nation; their government is such as Pharaoh himself never used the like; for they content not themselves with all temporal superiority, but by cruelty desire our blood and perpetual destruction; to blot out the whole remembrance of our name, together with our old Catholic religion, and to swear that the queen of England is supreme head of the Church."* On the other hand, the extermination of Popery was the war-cry of the English agents, and the burden of their songs of exultation after victory. Elizabeth's hatred of Catholicity, says O'Sullivan, was well known to every one; and "her agents and emissaries in Ireland sought by their oppression of the Catholics to rival the cruelty of their queen."† "They scarce ever gave quarter, (writes O'Connor), and when they did, it was in order to satiate their revenge. They massacred their prisoners in cold blood, as rebels and idolaters: treaties, capitulations, the laws of nations, the rights of war, were of no avail: they set fire to the towns and villages: they destroyed the corn and cattle, and drove the inhabitants, without distinction of sex or age, to feed on dockings and nettles, like the beasts of the field."‡ When Limerick surrendered, the whole garrison, notwithstanding the plighted faith of the English commander, were, by his orders, put to the sword; and in his official despatch to the queen, he does not hesitate to describe this success as a triumph of the Gospel.§ The massacre of the inhabitants of Dursey Island will serve as another instance: "On the arrival of the heretical troops," writes O'Sullivan, "many of the natives in alarm ran to the chapel as a place of safety; others sought refuge in the caves; some fled to the rocks, and some to the fortress, which was defended only by a few armed men. This was at once sur-

* Letter of 14th March, 1599, in "*Hibernia Pacata*."

† "*Hist. Cath.*," pag. 124.

‡ "*The History of the Irish Catholics*," etc., p. 14.

§ See, for particulars of this siege, the valuable notes of O'Donovan in *Four Masters*, and other documents, which we refer to, in *Life of Dr. Ovidio*, sec. 1.

rounded, and then the English, according to their custom, perpetrated a horrid deed of cruelty. The castle was reduced to ruins, the chapel and houses were consigned to the flames, whilst the disarmed garrison, with the whole multitude of the inhabitants—the aged, and the young, and the females—were fired on by the soldiery, smitten with their swords, and transfixed with their lances. The survivors, bound with cords, were cast headlong from the projecting rocks into the sea, and there overwhelmed with a shower of shot and stones.”* Such were the scenes which were enacted throughout the whole length and breadth of the kingdom. “It exceeds all belief,” says O’Mahony, “to what persecutions our Irish Catholics were subjected: many of our bishops suffered death at the hands of the heretical English, and all of them were obliged to seek their safety in concealment or flight: very many priests, both secular and religious, and innumerable individuals of both sexes, as well nobles as plebeians, were also put to death—to say nothing of confiscation of property, exile, imprisonment, and other like evils—all which our country suffered, as is known to heaven, and as I myself have partly witnessed, and in part have learned from the trustworthy evidence of others.”†

We shall conclude this article with the sketch of the condition of our island in 1589, as presented to us by O’Sullivan Beare, to to whose authority we have already so often had occasion to refer:

“All alarm from the Irish chieftains having ceased, the persecution was renewed with all its horrors; a royal order was promulgated that all should renounce the Catholic faith, yield up the priests, receive from the heretical ministers the morality and tenets of the gospel, and assist at their ceremonies on Sundays and Holidays; threats, and penalties, and force were to be employed to enforce compliance. . . . This excited universal alarm throughout the whole island. The natives everywhere refused to be contaminated by the preaching and rites of the heretics; sometimes, too, they struck terror into the ministers by night or by day; the ministers, on the other hand, cited the Catholics before the magistrates, and had them subjected to imprisonment and fines. Every effort of the queen and her emissaries were hence directed to

* “Hist. Cath.,” p. 238; also, “Hibernia Pacata,” p. 563; elsewhere, O’Sullivan, p. 129, describes the English in Munster as “barbara feritate humanum et Catholicum sanguinem sitiētes.”

† “Disput. Apolog.,” printed in 1645, p. 113.

despoil the Irish Catholics of their property, and exterminate them. More than once did they attempt this, for they knew that not otherwise could the Catholic religion be suppressed in our island, unless by the extermination of those in whose hearts it was implanted; nor could their heretical teachings be propagated whilst the natives were alive to detest and execrate them.”*

3.—*Devastation of the Country.*

A few extracts from the contemporary English authorities, will suffice to present some idea of the sad desolation that fell upon our country at this period. Hollingshed must be numbered amongst those writers whom none will accuse of partiality to Ireland. Nevertheless, when describing the excursion of the English troops into Munster, in 1579, he declares that “they preyed and took all the cattle in the country, and such people as they met they did, without mercy, put to the sword; by which means the whole country, having no cattle nor kine left, the inhabitants were driven to such extremities, that they were forced to die and perish for famine, or to die under the sword.”† He subsequently, more than once, describes the scenes “of neither man, woman, nor child been spared, all being committed to the sword:”‡ and of the English commanders dividing their armies into companies, that as they marched along they might everywhere burn and destroy the country.§ The consequence of such wholesale ruin was what might naturally be expected: “by reason,” he adds, “the harvest was taken from the natives, their cattle, in great number, preyed upon, and the whole country spoiled and burnt; the poor people, who lived only upon their labours, and were fed by their milch cows, were so distressed, that they would follow after the goods which were taken from them, and offer themselves and their wives and children, rather to be slain by the army than to suffer the famine wherewith they were now pinched.”||

Lord Gray was at this time commander of the English forces, and amongst those who came to Ireland in his train, was the far-famed Edmund Spencer. Kilcolman Castle, and its fair domains, were a portion of the spoils that fell to the poet's lot; and

* Hist. Cath. pag. 133-139.

† vi. 427.

‡ Ibid. pag. 430.

§ Ibid. 430, 452.

|| Ibid. pag. 433.

the sad scene of ruin which he depicts in his chief poem, is but a faithful picture of what presented itself to his view, as he thence scanned the once-smiling plains of Munster:—

“He, in his furie, all shall over-ronne,
 And holy church with faithless hands deface,
 That thy sad people, utterly for-donne,
 Shall, to the utmost mountains fly apace.
 Was never so great waste in any place,
 Nor so fowle outrage doen by living men;
 For all thy cities they shall sack and rase,
 And the green grass that groweth they shall bren,
 That even the wild beast shall die in starved den.”*

Despite, however, the sad desolation and the smoking ruins that thus enveloped our island, the same poet was elsewhere forced to cry out: “sure it is yet a most beautiful and sweet country as any is under heaven, being stored throughout with many goodly rivers, replenished with all sorts of fish most abundantly; sprinkled with many very sweet islands and goodly lakes, like little inland seas; adorned with goodly woods . . . besides the soil itself is most fertile, and lastly, the heavens most mild and temperate.”†

In the work from which this passage is taken, Spencer proposed to himself to develope a patent remedy to heal all the ills of our suffering island; and this remedy was nothing less than to employ numerous bands of troops “to tread down all that standeth before them, and lay on the ground all the stiff-necked people of that land;” and to insure the wished-for result, he suggests that the war should be carried on not in summer but in winter; “for then,” he says, “the trees are bare and naked, which use both to clothe and house the kerne; the ground is cold and wet, which useth to be his bedding; the air is sharp and bitter, to blow through his naked sides and legs; the kine are barren and without milk, which useth to be his only food, neither if he kill them will they yield him flesh, nor if he keep them will they give him food; besides being all with calf, they will, through much chasing and driving, cast all their calves and lose their milk, which should relieve him the next summer.”‡

* *Faerie Queene*, book iii. ch. 3.

† “*State of Ireland*,” pag. 28-9.

‡ *Ibid.* pag. 161, Dublin edit. 1809.

This prescription did not rest on mere theory; it was based upon his own experience; "the end," he continues, "will be very short, although there should none of them fall by the sword, nor be slain by the soldiery, yet being thus kept from manurance, and their cattle from running abroad, by this hard restraint, they would quickly consume themselves and devour one another. The proof whereof I saw sufficiently exemplified in these late wars in Munster; for notwithstanding that the same was a most rich and plentiful country, full of corn and cattle, yet, ere one year and a-half, they were brought to such wretchedness, as that any stony heart would have rued the same. Out of every corner of the woods and glens they came creeping forth upon their hands, for their legs could not bear them; they looked like anatomies of death; they spake like ghosts crying out of their graves; they did eat the dead carrions, happy where they could find them, yea, and one another soon after, insomuch as the very carcasses they spared not to scrape out of their graves; and if they found a plot of water-cresses or shamrocks, there they flocked as to a feast for the time, yet not able to continue there long withal, so that in a short space there were none almost left, and a most populous and plentiful country was suddenly left void of man and beast."*

A few years of peace and comparative tranquillity sufficed to restore the province of Munster to its former abundance. Towards the close of Elizabeth's reign, however, another storm of destruction was let loose upon this fertile region, and once more it was transformed into a barren wilderness and a dreary waste. Fortunately a record of some of the scenes of ruthless barbarism by which this ruin was effected, has been preserved to us from the pen of sir George Carew, who himself was the leader of the Vandal band. In the vicinity of Limerick, he tells us, his troop having burned all the houses and corn, they thence marched southward, "harassing the country and killing all mankind that were found therein." Soon after they entered the Arleaghe glens where, he adds, "we did the like, not leaving behind us man or beast, corn or cattle."† Some garrisons of Munster merited his special eulogy on account "of the

* State of Ireland, p. 166-7.

† Pacata Hibernia, p. 189.

great services which they performed." Nor are we left in ignorance as to the services which merited for them this eulogy: one of these garrisons, he tells us, "left neither corn nor barn nor house unburnt between Kinsale and Ross;" whilst another garrison "did the like between Ross and Bantry."*

It hence can occasion but little wonder that, as Leland writes, the whole southern province seemed "to be totally depopulated, and, except within the cities, exhibited an hideous scene of famine and desolation,"† so much so, indeed, that many of the English settlers at length presented a remonstrance to her majesty, declaring that such was the barbarity and tyranny of the lord deputy, "that little was now left in Ireland for her majesty to reign over but ashes and carcasses."‡

An eminent contemporary writer, Peter Lombard, archbishop of Armagh, who was himself a native of the southern province, thus vividly describes the cruelty exercised by the English soldiery, whilst carrying into execution the diabolical scheme of devastation:—

"Unheard-of cruelties were committed on the inhabitants of Munster by the English commanders. Great companies of these natives, men, women, and children, were often forced into castles and other houses, which were then set on fire; and if any of them attempted to escape from the flames, they were shot or stabbed by the soldiers who guarded them. It was a diversion to these monsters of men to take up infants on the points of their spears, and whirl them about in their agony; excusing their cruelty by saying, that if they were suffered to live they would become popish rebels. Many of the women, too, were found hanging on trees, with their children at their breasts strangled with their mothers' hair."§

As early as 1567, sir Henry Sydney, by order of the government, set out on a visitation of Munster and Connaught, and his report is little more than an unvarying tale of the frightful desolation which everywhere presented itself. Describing Munster,

* *Pacata Hibernia*, pag. 645; see also pag. 6, 56, 60, 476, 138, 153, 517, 583, 661, etc.

† *Hist. of Irl.*, book iv. chap. 3.

‡ Leland, *loc. cit.* chap. 2. Spencer also writes that a complaint was made against the deputy "that he was a bloody man, and regarded not the life of her majesty's subjects no more than dogs, but had wasted and consumed all, so as now she had nothing almost left but to reign in their ashes."—*State of Irel.* pag. 168-9.

§ *Comment. de Reg. Hib.*

he writes: "Like as I never was in a more pleasant country in all my life, so I never saw a more waste and desolate land. . . . Such horrible and lamentable spectacles are there to behold, as the burning of villages, the ruin of churches, the wasting of such as have been good towns and castles; yea, the view of the bones and skulls of the dead subjects, who, partly by murder, partly by famine, have died in the fields, as in troth, hardly any Christian with dry eyes could behold." From Munster* he proceeded to Connaught, and found the same wide-spread utter desolation everywhere; and this, too, he says, not owing to the war, but to the policy of the government, which "kept the people in continual dissension;" and he adds: "so far hath that policy, or rather lack of policy prevailed, as now albeit all that are alive would become honest and live in quiet, yet are there not left alive in these two provinces, the twentieth person necessary to inhabit the same." As an instance, he writes of Athenry: "The town is large and well walled, and it appeareth by matter of record, there hath been in it three hundred good householders: and since I knew this land there were twenty, and now I find but four, and they poor, and whilst I write, ready to leave the place."†

The province of Leinster had for some time enjoyed the sweets of peace and abundance, but in the universal wreck of our island, this prosperity could not be of long continuance. "The Leinster rebels," writes Leland, "by driving the royalists into their fortified towns, and living long without molestation, had cultivated their lands, and established an unusual regularity and plenty in their districts. But now they were exposed to the most rueful havoc from the queen's forces. The soldiers, encouraged by the example of their officers, everywhere cut down the standing corn with their swords, and devised every means to deprive the wretched inhabitants of all the necessities of life; for, famine was judged the speediest and most effectual

* The Life of Sir John Perrot gives many further details of the ruin and devastation of Munster, see pag. 56, etc. Writing from Dublin Castle, on 31st January, 1585, he requests some provision for the troops in Munster, "where there is not so much to be had as will serve for my own family, or yet to feed my horses till the grass grows."—Ibid. pag. 304.

† "Letters and Memorials of State," published by Arthur Collins, London, folio 1747, vol. i., pag. 89, seqq.

means of reducing them.* This statement of the Protestant historian is confirmed by the secretary of the deputy, lord Mountjoy, who states that when, towards the close of the century, the English troops entered Leix, they found the land well manured, the fields well fenced, the roads and pathways well beaten, the towns populous, so that the invaders were struck with amazement at the prosperity of "so barbarous inhabitants;" but, he continues "our captains, and by their example, the common soldiers, did cut down with their swords all the rebels' corn, to the value of £10,000, and upwards, the only means by which they were to live."† It was about the same time that lord Mountjoy made another incursion into Offaly, where he pursued the same ruthless policy, and devised a sort of harrows called *pracas*, constructed with long pins, with which he tore up from the roots all the unripe corn.‡

As to Ulster, Leland informs us that "there too the English commanders had recourse to devastation, in order to bring down a famine on the country." "The governor of Carrickfergus, sir Arthur Chichester, issued from his quarters, and for twenty miles round, reduced the country to a desert. Sir Samuel Bagnal, the governor of Newry, proceeded with the same severity, and laid waste all the adjacent lands. All the English garrisons were daily employed in pillaging and wasting." He adds that the inhabitants "were effectually prevented from sowing and cultivating their lands."§

Ulster was indeed the province best guarded against devastation; and for many years the sword of O'Neil was an insuperable barrier to the advance of the English troops.¶ In the interval, however, from 1600 to 1603, the expedition of sir

* Hist. iv. 5.

† Fynes Moryson, "Hist. of Irl."

‡ Annals of Four Masters, pag. 2187.

§ Hist. book iv. ch. v.

¶ Were it not for the energy and valour of O'Neil, the ruin of Ulster would have been achieved at a much earlier date. Sir H. Sydney, describing Ulster in 1575, states of the two best counties of the province (Down and Antrim) :—" *Lecale*, much of the country waste ; *Dufferin*, or White's country, all waste and desolate ; the *Ardes* much impoverished, but in good hope of recovery, for there are many freeholders of English race of ancient habiting there ; county of *Clandeboy* utterly disinhabited ; town of *Knockfergus* much decayed and impoverished, no ploughs going at all, where before were many ; and great store of kyne and cattle belonging to the town, now few or none left ; church and houses, saving castles, burned ; the inhabitants fled, not above five householders of any countenance left remaining."—Sydney, Papers, vol. p. 76, seqq.

Henry Dowcra on one side, and lord Mountjoy on the other, put an end to its peace and abundance. Dowcra wrote, in 1614, an account of his excursion, which was published by the Celtic Society in 1849. At every page he describes the abundance and fertility of the country as his troops advanced, and the ruin and desolation which marked their progress. Entering O'Kane's country, he says, "we found it large and full of houses and corn; we divided ourselves, and set a compass about, so as at night we met altogether, and encamped in the midst of the country, each troop having fired the houses and corn they met withal, which I never saw in more abundance."* Having advanced towards Lough Neagh, and met with the forces of sir Arthur Chichester, "ten days," he says, "I stayed with his lordship in these parts, assisting him to waste and spoil the country, which he endeavoured by all the means he could possibly to do."† A little later, compendiating his services, he requests the reader to hold in mind, that when he landed in Ulster, on 16th May, 1600, "the country abounded with houses, corn, cattle, and a people that had been bred up in arms, and flushed with former victories;" but now, after his expedition, only the English quarters "were replenished with such corn and cattle as was left, and the rest desolate and waste; the people upon it brought to desperate extremities, and enjoying nothing but as fugitives and what they obtained by stealth."‡

* Miscel. of Celtic Soc. 1849, pag. 257.

† Ibid. 260. It was long before some of the Ulster towns recovered from these devastations. In the "Memorial of the Life and Death of Bishop Spottiswood" (appointed bishop of Clogher in 1621), the town of Clogher is described as "an ancient city, decorated with two churches and a great number of inhabitants; but in the late wars it was utterly ruined, the churches undermined and fired, the bishop's, and the abbot's, and the canons' houses were demolished; and at the bishop's coming to dwell there, there were no more than ten or twelve poor people dwelling in cottages patched up with skreas and wattles."—(pag. 66.) In the "Direction for the Plantation of Ulster," by Blennerhassett (London, 1610), we read of Armagh:—"How exceedingly well standeth Armagh; better seat for rich soil there cannot be; but so poor, as I do verily think all the household stuff in that city is not worth £20."

‡ Ibid. pag. 271. O'Kane had for some time sided with the English against O'Neil: on seeing the requital which he now received, "he shook hands with my lord Hugh (O'Neil), and bade the devil take all Englishmen, and as many as put their trust in them."—(Dowcra's "Narrative," p. 277.) It is a remarkable circumstance, that all the Irish chieftains who at any time sided with the English, in the end breathed a similar prayer. Thus, Cormac M'Carthy

Lord Mountjoy's expedition was crowned with a similar result; and writing to Cecil, he was able to boast that he had succeeded, "by the grace of God, as near as he could, in utterly wasting the country of Tyrone."

(Hib. Pacat. pag. 180); the *Sugan* Earl (ibid. pag. 72, 73, and 252); Tyrone (ibid. p. 36, 233, 305-7, etc.); O'Sullivan (ibid. p. 409, 486), etc.

* The Irish Archæological Society, in 1841, published a description of Ireland, made in 1589, by Robert Payne, who was one of the English *undertakers*, amongst whom were partitioned the 574,628 acres of the Desmond estates. A few extracts from this "description" will serve to complete the sketch of Irish character, as given in this article:

"Let not the reports of those that have spent all their own, discourage you from Ireland, although they and such others, by bad dealings, have wrought a general discredit to all Englishmen in this country, with whom the Irish are unacquainted.

"They will say there is great danger in travelling this country, and much more to dwell there: yet are they freed from three of the greatest dangers: first, they cannot meet in all that land any worse than themselves; second, they need not fear robbing, for they have not anything to lose; third, they are not like to run in debt, for there is none that will trust them. The greatest matter which troubleth them is, they cannot get anything but by honest labour, which they are altogether ignorant of. . . .

"The (Irish) people are of three sorts: the better sort, are very civil and honestly given; the most of them greatly inclined to husbandry, although, as yet, unskilful; notwithstanding, many of them are rich in cattle; some one man there milketh one hundred kine, and two or three hundred ewes and goats. . . . Although they never saw you before, they will make you the best cheer their country yieldeth, for two or three days, and take not anything in return. Most of them speak good English, and bring up their children to learning. I saw in a grammar school in Limerick, one hundred and sixty scholars. . . . They keep their promise faithfully, and are more desirous of peace than our Englishmen. They are quick-witted, and are of good constitution of body: nothing is more pleasing to them than to hear of good justices being placed amongst them. They are obedient to the laws, so that you may travel through all the land without any danger or injury from the very worst Irish, and be greatly relieved by the best.

"The second sort, being least in number, are called kerns: they are warlike men: most of them were slain in the late wars.

"The third sort are a very idle people, not unlike our English beggars, yet, for the most part, of pure complexion, and good constitution of body. . . .

"Although some undertakers of small judgment, have failed in their expected crops, in consequence of their unskilful choice of ground, yet, assuredly, the commodities of the country are many more than either the people can well use or I recite. Their soil, for the most part, is very fertile, and apt for wheat, rye, barley, pease, beans, oats, etc., and all other grains and fruits that England in any way doth yield. There is much good timber in many places, and of that straightness, and so good to rive, that a single workman with an axe will cleave a great oak to boards of less than one inch thick, fourteen inches broad, and fifteen feet in length: such a board there, is usually sold for two pence half-penny. . . . A barrel of wheat, or a barrel of salt, containing three bushels and a half of good Winchester measure, is sold there for four shillings; malt, pease, beans, for 2s. 8d.; barley, for 2s. 4d.; oats, for 20d.; a fresh salmon (worth in London 10s.) for 6d.; twenty-four herrings, a fat hen, thirty eggs, a fat pig, one pound of butter, or two gallons of new milk, for a penny; a red deer, without the skin, for 2s. 6d.; a fat ox for 13s. 4d.; a fat sheep for 18d. There is great store of wild swans, cranes, pheasants, partridges, etc., and all

4.—*Famine which Ensued.*

The devastating policy pursued by the English troops* was destined to bear its natural fruit, and many of the passages which we have cited, whilst they detail the ruin and desolation that everywhere marked the progress of the English arms, record at the same time the dire consequences of pestilence and famine which completed the martyrdom of our suffering people.

We closed the preceding article with the expedition of Mountjoy into Ulster. We may now hear from sir John Davis the result of that expedition: "The queen's army, under lord Mountjoy, succeeded in breaking, and absolutely subduing, all the lords and chieftains of the Irishry. Whereupon the multitude being brayed, as it were, in a mortar, with sword, famine, and pestilence together, submitted themselves to the English government."* The lord deputy himself, writing to Cecil and the privy council in England in 1602, attests that in his march through the northern districts, he "found everywhere men dead of famine;" and he adds that some of his party had assured him "that between Tullaghoge and Toome, there lay unburied one thousand dead, and that since our first coming this year to the Blackwater, there were about three thousand starved in Tyrone."†

The secretary of lord Mountjoy gives us some special details: "Because I have often made mention formerly (he says) of our destroying the rebels' corn and using all means to famish them, let me now, by two or three examples, show the miserable estate to which they were thereby reduced." He then cites some dreadful examples: sir Arthur Chichester and other officers, he says, witnessed the horrid spectacle of three children

other fowl, much more plentifully than in England. You may buy a dozen of quails for 3d.; a dozen of woodcocks for 4d. Oysters, etc., about the sea coasts are to be had for the gathering, in great plenty. You may buy the best heifers, with calves at their feet, for 20s. a-piece, which are nothing inferior to the Lincolnshire breed.—Tracts relating to Ireland. I.A.S., 1841.

* Davies' "Historical Tracts" (Discovery of the True Cause, etc., first published in 1612; reprinted, Dublin, 1787) p. 54.

† Ap. Fynes Moryson, p. 237.

feeding on the flesh of their dead mother;* and again, in the vicinity of Newry, some old women were proved to have subsisted on the flesh of children who were slain; in fact, "the common sort of rebels were driven to unspeakable extremities, beyond the records of any history that I ever read;" and he adds, "no spectacle was more frequent in the ditches of towns, and especially in the wasted countries, than to see multitudes of these poor people dead, with their mouths all coloured green by eating nettles, docks, and all things they could rend up above the ground."†

The province of Leinster had been mercilessly laid waste, and the famine which ensued involved in one common ruin the persecutors and those whom they persecuted. The Protestant chancellor of Leighlin attests (Dowling's Annals, p. 41), that in 1575 "a great pestilence laid waste Wexford, Dublin, Naas, Athy, Carlow and Leighlin-bridge, and the city of Dublin was so depopulated by it, that the very streets and church porticoes seemed changed to meadow-land." At the close of the century, the same scene was renewed, as lord Burgh records, who, writing to Cecil in 1597, declares: "It is lamentable to hear of, but woful to behold, soldiers, citizens, villagers, and all sorts, daily perish through famine; so, as I write to you, the end is, both the spoiler and the spoiled are in like calamities."‡

As Munster, however, was the district most involved in ruin and desolation, so was it there that famine and pestilence displayed their full violence and exercised a wider sway. We shall allow Hollingshed to present its details; the simplicity and quaintness of his narrative renders it the more impressive and unimpeachable:

"As for the great companies of soldiers, gallowglasses, kerne, and the common people who followed the rebellion, the numbers of them are infinite whose blood the earth drank up, and whose carcasses the beasts

* Cox also mentions this fact. Speaking of the "service of devastation" entrusted to the English soldiers, he writes: "They performed that service effectually, and brought the rebels to so low a condition, that they saw three children eating the entrails of their dead mother, upon whose flesh they had fed many days, and roasted it by a slow fire."—p. 449.

† Fynes Moryson, "Hist. of Irel," p. 272; see also Curry's "Historical Review," pp. 26-27.

‡ State Pap. Off. London.

of the field and the ravening fowls of the air did consume and devour. After this followed an extreme famine, and such whom the sword did not destroy, the same did consume and eat out—very few or none remaining alive excepting such as were fled over into England; and yet the store in the towns was far spent and they in distress, albeit nothing like in comparison to them who lived at large, for they were not only driven to eat horses, dogs, and dead carrions, but also did devour the carcasses of dead men, whereof there be sundry examples—namely, one in the county of Cork, where, when a malefactor was executed to death and his body left upon the gallows, certain poor people did secretly come, took him down and did eat him; likewise in the bay of Smerwick, the place which was first seasoned with this rebellion, there happened to be a ship there lost through foul weather, and all the men being drowned were there cast on land. The common people who had a long time lived on limpets, orewads, and such shell-fish as they could find, and which were now spent, as soon as they saw these bodies, they took them up and most greedily did eat and devour them, and not long after, death and famine did eat and consume them. The land itself, which before those wars was populous, well inhabited, and rich in all the good blessings of God, being plenteous of corn, full of cattle, well stored with fish and sundry other good commodities, is now become waste and barren; yielding no fruits, the pastures no cattle, the air no birds; the seas, though full of fish, yet to them yielding nothing. Finally, every way the curse of God was so great, and the land so barren both of man and beast, that whosoever did travel from the one end to the other of all Munster, even from Waterford to the head of Smerwick, which is about six score miles, he would not meet any man, woman, or child, saving in towns and cities, nor yet see any beast, but the very wolves, the foxes, and other like ravening beasts, many of them lay dead, being famished, and the residue gone elsewhere.”*

Such was the sad destruction which had fallen on a country blessed by Providence with smiling abundance and all the riches of nature; and well nigh was realized the barbarous project which the persecutors had proposed to themselves, “to cut off, forsooth, by pestilence and famine, the Catholics of Ireland whom they could not slay by the sword.”†

Mooney, who was an eye-witness of these scenes of misery, attests, that so general was the devastation of the whole island, that “in most parts you would travel forty miles through the country without meeting any human creature, or even any ani-

* Hollingshed, vi. 459.

† O’Sullivan Beare, “Hist. Cath.,” pag. 146. “Nec est pretereundum aliud Protestantium stratagema qui Catholicorum agros, mancipia, segetes, armenta, ferro flammaque corrumpébant, ut quos virtute superare non poterant, fame et inedia vincerent.”

mals except birds and wild beasts. Hence ensued so great a famine, that men were sometimes known to eat human flesh, though this was of rare occurrence; a more common case was their subsisting on horse-flesh. The farms were left untilld; and even in the districts which, being free from the ravages of war, were well cultivated, all the produce was designedly destroyed by fire by the enemy. I myself witnessed the English army cutting down the corn with scythes in the month of July, when as yet the ear was scarce shot out, intending by this means to destroy the remnant of the natives by famine.”*

We shall conclude this dismal tale of misery and woe with the words of O’Sullivan Beare, who thus describes the state of Ireland, in the last year of Elizabeth’s reign:—

“All Ireland was devastated and reduced to ruin: an unparalleled scarcity and famine pervaded everywhere. Nor was it man alone that suffered; the very beasts of the field were in many places swept away, having nothing to subsist upon; the wolves abandoning the hills and woods, assailed and devoured the emaciated inhabitants. The dogs rooted up from the graves the decaying corpses, and devoured even the very bones of the deceased.”†

5.—*Some Examples to illustrate this Period of Persecution.*

WE have already had occasion to commemorate the appointment of Dr. William Walsh to the diocese of Meath: we now recall his name, to record the fortitude and Christian heroism which he displayed, in enduring a cruel imprisonment and exile for the Catholic faith.

During the short period of his episcopate, he conciliated the universal esteem of the Irish Catholics. “Acceptable to God,” says his biographer, “and pleasing to men, his whole life breathed nothing but sanctity, and all his labours were directed to promote the interests of the heavenly King.”‡ He opposed,

* Hist. MS., Franciscan, pag. 93.

† “Hist. Cath.,” pag. 261. We find recorded the following extraordinary rise in the price of provisions in Dublin in 1602. Wheat rose from 36s. to £9 per quarter; barley malt, from 10s. to 43s. per barrel; oats, from 3s. 4d. to 24s.; beef, from 26s. 8d. to £8 per carcase; mutton, from 3s. to 26s., ditto; lamb, from 1s. to 6s., ditto, &c.—See M’Gregor’s “History of Limerick,” 1827, vol. ii. pag. 218.

‡ Henriquez, in his “Fasciculus SS. Ord. Cistercien.” printed in folio at

with dauntless courage, the attempted innovations of Elizabeth, and whilst the storm of persecution was gathering around our island, he was at the same time the consolation and refuge of his immediate flock, and by his exhortations and the example of his spotless life, a pillar of strength to the Catholics of the whole kingdom. Hence he was at once marked out as their victim by the agents of persecution. Ware merely commemorates that Dr. Walsh was "very zealous for the Romish Church," and that on the accession of Elizabeth he not only did not assent to her innovations, but publicly impugned them, "for which the lord lieutenant confined him," at the same time soliciting further instructions from her majesty. An order to place him under close arrest was the reply, and a few months later he was deposed by royal authority, and deprived of the temporalities of his see.* On the 13th of July, 1565, he was brought into court before Dr. Loftus and the other ecclesiastical commissioners, and sentenced by them to imprisonment in Dublin Castle. The motives which led to this sentence are thus stated by Dr. Loftus himself, in his letter to sir William Cecil, 16th July, 1565: "He refused the oath (of supremacy) and to answer such articles as we required of him: and besides, ever since the parliament he hath manifestly contemned and openly showed himself to be a misliker of all the queen's majesty's proceedings: he openly protested before all the people the same day he was before us, that he would never communicate or be present (by his will) where the Protestant service should be ministered; for it was against his conscience and against God's word."†

Brussels in 1624, devotes three whole chapters to the life of Dr. Walsh, which he thus entitles: "*Gloriosum certamen B. Gulielmi Walshæi, Monachi Cisterciensis in Hibernia, Episcopi Midensis et Martyris*," vol. ii. p. 362, seqq. The other documents which we have consulted for this sketch of Dr. Walsh's lengthened martyrdom, are the "*Menologium Ordin. Cisterciën.*," by Henriquez; also, a fragment of an Italian martyrology of the Cistercians, written in the seventeenth century, and preserved in the Valicellian archives; and three letters of the holy bishop, which we were fortunate enough to discover in the Vatican archives. The reader will find an interesting sketch of Dr. Walsh's life in "*The Diocese of Meath*," etc., by Rev. A. Cogan, Dublin, 1862.

* Ware's "*Annales Regn. Eliz.*," 1560, and letter of Dr. Walsh, 5th July, 1573.

† Shirley "*Orig. Lett.*," p. 220. The Protestant archbishop in the same letter passes this eulogy on Dr. Walsh: "He is one of great credit amongst his countrymen, and upon whom, as touching causes of religion, they wholly depend."

As no pretext could be devised for leading him to the scaffold, he once more received the culprit's chains, and was re-conducted to his former prison;* this was "a subterraneous dungeon, damp and noisome,—not a ray of light penetrated thither; and for thirteen years this was his unvarying abode."† During all that time his food was of the coarsest kind; and, with the exception of rare intervals, when the intercession of some influential friends obtained a momentary relaxation, he was allowed no occupation that could cheer the tedium of his imprisonment. In all this lengthened martyrdom, prayer was his resource, and as he himself subsequently avowed, he oftentimes passed whole days and nights overwhelmed with heavenly consolations, so that his dungeon seemed transformed into a paradise of delights. To preclude the possibility of idleness, he procured a bed made of twisted cords, and whensoever his mind was fatigued with prayer, he applied himself to untie these cords, and often was he well wearied with the exertion before he could re-unite them to compose himself to sleep.‡

His persecutors, overcome by his constancy, and finding his fervour in spiritual contemplation a continual reproach to their own wickedness, at length, about Christmas 1572, connived at his escape. Sailing from our shores, his only regret was to abandon the field of his spiritual labours, and to leave his flock defenceless amidst the many enemies that now compassed its destruction. His friends had provided a ship bound for Bretagne; for sixteen days he was tossed on the waves by a violent storm, and was at length driven in shipwreck on the coast of France.§ Weighed down with the infirmities which he contracted in prison, and with the burden of more than sixty years, he was compelled to remain for six months unknown and abandoned in Nantes.¶ At length, receiving aid from the nuncio, he proceeded to Paris, and thence to Spain. The closing years of

* "In tetrum carcerem," letter, 5th July, 1573.

† Fasciculus, etc., vol. ii. p. 363.

‡ Fasciculus, pag. 364.

§ "Industria et ope amicorum inde ereptus, reperta Britannicæ navis opportunitate, in quam me conjeci, ætatis plus quam sexagenariæ aut valetudinis nulla habita ratione, tutius ducens vitam vorticibus credere marinis quam hostium Catholicæ Religionis iterum experiri feritatem."—Lett. of 5th July, 1573.

his life were spent in Alcalá. A noble Spanish lady received him into her house, and attended him as though he were an angel from heaven. The sores which yet remained from his dungeon-chains she kissed as the trophies of his martyrdom: she would allow none but herself to wait on him, and on her knees she usually dressed his wounds and ministered to his wants. From this asylum of charity, thus providentially prepared for him, he passed to the convent of the Cistercian fathers in the same city, and there, on the 4th of January, 1577, he happily closed his earthly life which, as many attested, he had never sullied by any stain of mortal sin.* His remains were placed in the collegiate church of St. Secundinus; and he is still held in veneration by his Cistercian brethren, as a holy martyr in the cause of the Catholic faith.

Dermot O'Hurley is one of the most glorious names on the roll of Irish martyrs. He was distinguished in the literary circles of the age as a rhetorician and canonist. For four years he taught philosophy in Louvain,† and subsequently held, with great applause, the chair of canon law in Rheims. Proceeding to Rome, his merits soon attracted the notice of Gregory XIII., and in 1580‡ he was advanced to the metropolitan see of Cashel. He was of imposing stature, writes O'Sullivan; noble in his deportment, and none more mild had ever held the crozier of St. Cormac. For a little while he tarried amidst the monuments and sanctuaries of Rome, and then set out for his afflicted church. From a peaceful sojourn in the Catholic lands of Belgium, France, and Italy, his lot was now changed to a province well nigh a desert waste, and still infested by marauders, who were stimulated by a worse frenzy and fury than the Iconoclasts of old. Burning with desire to trim the lamp of faith, he hastened from district to district, "administered the sacraments with incredible zeal, and imparted the doctrines of salvation to his spiritual flock."§ In 1583, being beset on every

* "Con grandissima ragione fu questi stimato Martire e ricevuto per santo come quello che in tutto il decorso di sua vita mai con peccato grave aveva macchiata l'innocenza battesimale."—Martirolog. Cisterc MS.

† "Postquam Lovanii docuit sublimia sensa humanæ sophiæ patris Aristotelis."—(*Elogium Elegiac.*) It is by mistake that O'Sullivan reckons him among the professors of canon law in Louvain.

‡ Ex. Act. Consist.

§ O'Sullivan's Hist. Cath. pag. 124.

side by heretical spies, he found it necessary to bend before the storm of persecution, and seek a refuge in the castle of Slane, in the county Meath. Here he for some time enjoyed a happy and undisturbed retreat,—God so disposing to prepare him for the terrible trial, in which he should so soon be called on to seal with his blood the sacred truths which he taught. A singular circumstance, minutely described by O'Sullivan, led to his arrest. One day the lord chancellor, Robert Dillon, came on a visit to the castle of Slane. During dinner, some heretics who were present, seized an opportunity of charging the Catholics with the most revolting doctrines; and so licentious were their remarks, that the archbishop, though in disguise, felt himself constrained to refute their calumnies. This he did with such grace, eloquence, and learning, as filled the whole party with reverence and surprise. The chancellor at once surmised that he was some distinguished personage sent to our island to oppose the progress of heresy; and on his return to Dublin, informed the Protestant archbishop Loftus and sir Henry Wallop, both of whom, as royal commissioners, governed the kingdom in the absence of the viceroy. A troop was at once sent to arrest the unknown stranger, but before their arrival, Dr. O'Hurley had made his escape, and taken refuge in Carrick-on-Suir. Thither he was tracked, and being soon arrested, was hurried to the capital. Being asked if he were a priest, he replied in the affirmative, and added, moreover, that he was an archbishop. He was then “thrown into a dark and loathsome prison, and kept there bound in chains till the Holy Thursday of the following year” (1584),* when he was again summoned before Loftus and Wallop. At first they received him kindly, and sought by entreaty to induce him to subscribe the oath of supremacy, and reject the spiritual authority of the Holy See; they promised him, should he comply, not only a full pardon, but, moreover, ecclesiastical preferments, and all the smiles of court favour. “Dr. O'Hurley replied, that he had resolved never to abandon, for any temporal reward, the Catholic Church, the Vicar of Christ, and the true faith. The lords justices, seeing that promises would not avail, had recourse to reasoning, and proposed the usual arguments against the Catholic doctrines. The

* O'Sullivan, *ibid.*

archbishop smiled at their simplicity, and told them they should blush to propose what they knew to be frivolous sophistry, to one who had been educated in the first universities of the continent. On hearing this, they were filled with rage. If arguments fail to convince him, they said, we shall try other means to change his purpose:”* they hoped thus to extort from him by torture, if not a denial of his faith, at least a confession of some complicity in treasonable designs.†

The torture to which he was subjected recalls the worst days of Nero and Domitian: “the holy prelate being thrown on the ground, was bound to the trunk of a large tree, with his hands and body chained; his legs were then forced into long boots‡ (reaching above the knees) which were filled with salt, butter, oil, turpentine, and pitch; and thus encased, his limbs were stretched on an iron grate, under which a fire was kindled, causing a terrible and cruel agony. For an hour he was subjected to this torture; as the pitch, oil, and other materials boiled, not only did the skin fall off, but the flesh itself melted away; the muscles, veins, and arteries were gradually contracted, and when the boots were pulled off, particles of the broiled flesh being torn off with them, not a small portion of the bones was left quite bare, presenting a horrid spectacle, which no words can describe. Still the holy martyr, having his mind fixed on God and holy things, never uttered a word of complaint, but endured the dreadful torture with the greatest courage, maintaining to the very end the same serene and tranquil countenance. The tyrants had vainly thought to subdue his spirit by these torments, but, at length, they ordered him to be again thrown into his former dark and loathsome dungeon, for he was ready to endure still greater suffering, if such could be devised.§ In prison no means were left untried to shake his constancy; even his sister was sent to induce him to alter his resolution, but he reproached her for her temerity, and implored her to fall on her

* O’Sullivan, pag. 124.

† Roth. *Analecta*: also letter of Geoghegan, 4th June, 1584.

‡ The letter of Geoghegan, just referred to, calls them leather boots; however, the bishop of Killaloe describes them as *ocreas plumbeas* (letter of Oct. 29th, 1584), that is, boots made of tin.

§ O’Sullivan, pag. 125.

knees and ask forgiveness of God for this great crime.* A worthy priest, named Mac Morris, skilled in medicine, found access to the archbishop, and treated his wounds with such skill, that in a few days his strength began to return. This made the lords justices resolve on his immediate execution; "and lest there should be public excitement, or any attempt made to rescue the archbishop, the soldiers were instructed to bring him to the place of execution immediately at day-light, and to hang him before any people could assemble. These orders were strictly carried out; only two of the citizens followed the martyr, together with a friend, who had watched over him with intense anxiety from the first moment of his arrest. It is said that the holy bishop, as he was led forth, seized the hand of this friend, and pressing it closely, imprinted on it a red sign of the cross, as a lasting token of his gratitude, and that this mark could never be effaced"† At early dawn on Friday, the 6th of May, 1584, Dr. O'Hurley, being in the sixty-fifth year of his age, consummated his martyrdom, and his mangled remains were deposited in the old church-yard of St. Kevin.‡

One circumstance connected with the heroic constancy of Dr. O'Hurley deserves to be specially commemorated. The bishop of Ferns had wavered in his allegiance to the Holy See, and hence, at this period, stood high in court favour. Witnessing the triumph of Dr. O'Hurley, he was struck with remorse for his own imbecility and criminal denial of his faith,§ and hastening to the lords justices, declared that he was sorry for his past guilt, and now rejected with disdain the spiritual supremacy of Elizabeth: "he, too," writes the bishop of Killaloe in October that same year, "is now confined in a most loathsome dungeon, from which every ray of light is excluded."||

We shall conclude this sketch of Dr. O'Hurley's martyrdom with the words of his own suffragan bishop, who, in the letter just referred to, thus attests the immoveable constancy of the archbishop: "The archbishop of Cashel endured martyrdom in Dublin with most glorious firmness and heroism; and although

* Roth. *Analecta*. † O'Sullivan, pag. 126. ‡ Rothe, loc. cit.

§ *Lettera di Geoghegan*, 4th of June, 1584; and letter of Cornelius Laonensis from Lisbon, 29th October, 1584.

|| *Epist.*, cit.

subjected to the most dreadful torture, yet could never be induced to subscribe to the iniquitous innovations of Elizabeth . . . He died fearlessly and gloriously confessing his faith; but what afflicts me is, that our martyrs are no longer led publicly to execution, but are put to death in private without the presence of the people: it was thus the archbishop was executed by only three soldiers, fearing lest he should exhort and inflame the people to constancy in their Christian faith."*

With the archbishop of Cashel must be associated his companion in suffering, Dr. Murtagh O'Brien, bishop of Emly.† In the letter of Dr. Cornelius O'Mulrian just referred to, immediately after the eulogy of the heroic martyr of Cashel, is added a brief but pregnant commendation of Dr. O'Brien: "The bishop of Emly," he says, "who is equally constant in the faith, is at present confined in the Dublin dungeons; they are now preparing for him, too, the tin boots, and intend to apply the fiery ordeal as they did with the archbishop, that thus, if possible, they may compel him to renounce his religion." This was on the 29th of October, 1584. Of his subsequent sufferings no record has been preserved; but Mooney chronicles his death in prison in the following year.‡

Dr. Thomas O'Herlihy was also rendered illustrious by his sufferings in the cause of our holy faith. Of noble birth, and remarkable for his virtue, he had been promoted to the see of Ross on 17th of December, 1561.§ He assisted, together with the bishops of Raphoe and Achonry, at the last sessions of the council of Trent, and in the acts of that œcumenical synod has left the record of his prudence, and learning, and devotedness to the Holy See. He thence hastened to console his persecuted flock; "his labours were incredible," writes O'Sullivan, "in preaching against heresy, administering the sacraments, and

* Letter of Dr. Cornelius O'Mulrian, loc. cit. ex Archiv. Secret. Vatican.

† The Consistorial Acts commemorate the appointment to the see of Emly of *D. Mauritiū MacBrien*, on 24th January, 1567. This was manifestly the same bishop whose death is referred to in the text.

‡ MS. Hist. of the Francisc. "Denuo Moriartus O'Brien epus. Imolacensis Dublini mortuus est in carcere an. 1585" (page 95). The "Processus Martyrialis," also records his death in prison, but refers it to 1586.

§ Ex Act. Consist. According to local tradition he was a native of the parish of Kilmacalna, in the same diocese.

ordaining young levites for the service of the sanctuary.”* The agents of persecution marked him for their victim; but for some time searched for him in vain in all the recesses of his diocese. He had taken refuge in a small island on the southern coast, and was at length arrested there in the spring of 1571, and delivered up to the newly-appointed viceroy, sir John Perrot, who, without delay, transferred him to the prisons of London Tower.† “Being brought before the court, he defended his spiritual allegiance to Rome with great ability and learning, and solved with ease the arguments which were proposed to him. This, however, did not procure for him any relaxation in his confinement; and hence, when brought a second time into court, he maintained a strict silence. On being repeatedly interrogated as to the cause of this silence, he at length replied: ‘If justice were to be the criterion of my cause, I should no longer be in chains, having already established my innocence, and cleared myself of every imputation of crime; but as you are resolved to be guided not by the dictates of equity and justice, but by your own preconceived opinions, I thought it useless to plead, knowing that it would be of no avail.’” He was then reconducted to prison, and subjected to the most rigorous treatment; weighed down with chains, he was compelled to endure hunger and thirst, together with utter darkness in his fetid dungeon; vermin swarmed over his whole frame, and the emboldened mice gnawed away the very soles of his feet.”‡ It was only after three years and seven months that some of the southern princes, whom the English government was anxious to conciliate, purchased his release. During the years which intervened till his death in 1580,§ he enjoyed the confidence of the Holy See, and in the fulness of his zeal and sanctity, he exercised his sacred functions throughout the whole island. The last trace we find of this venerable confessor is amidst the Irish soldiers in the Desmond war, ministering to their spiritual

* Hist. Cath., pag. 109, seq.

† Rothe “Process. Martyr.,” pag. 73.

‡ O’Sullivan, loc. cit., pag. 111.

§ Ware, following the old computation, places his death in 1579. The date in the text rests on the authority of Sanders. Both statements may be reconciled by placing his death in the first three months of 1580.

wants, and together with the papal nuncio and the bishops of Ardferf and Killaloe "sharing the perils of the camp."*

It was in prison, by the silent martyrdom of poison, that Dr. Richard Creagh, archbishop of Armagh, triumphed over heresy. More than once, being freed from his persecutors by a manifest interposition of God, he applied himself to restore discipline, and rekindle the fervour of our afflicted Church; and when once more he became a prey to his pursuers, he unceasingly displayed, through every phase of suffering, an unvarying devotedness to the Catholic faith. He was offered his liberty and rewards, should he consent to consecrate the newly-patented Protestant prelates; but he replied that no earthly treasures would ever induce him to lay his anointed hands upon them, or to concur in their sin. When after his second arrest he was placed upon his trial in Dublin, accused of high treason, he was acquitted by the jury; but the jurors, for this sentence, were themselves condemned to pay heavy fines. This acquittal did not procure his liberation. Being transferred to London, his enemies employed the foulest arts to stain his character and procure sentence of death against him. One of their stratagems recalls the efforts of the Arians against the glorious champion of orthodoxy, St. Athanasius. A damsel was suborned to accuse the holy bishop of having offered insult to her. The time appointed for the trial approached, and everything promised her a certain triumph: so certain, indeed, were his iniquitous persecutors of overwhelming their victim and the whole Catholic body with confusion, that they procured a large number of the nobility and gentry to assemble to witness his condemnation. On the day of trial the prosecutrix boldly came forward and repeated her tale of accusation; but when told to identify the prisoner, she was so struck by the saintly countenance of the venerable prelate, that, filled with remorse, she seemed to have lost all consciousness, and when at length she was able to proceed, she, in presence of the assembled multitude, avowed that the accusation was a mere concocted scheme; that the prisoner had never even touched the hem of her garments, and that she implored pardon

* Correspondence of Sanders in *Archiv. Secret. Vatic.*, 1579, 1580. See fuller detail in first chapter of the history of the archbishops.

from Heaven for having co-operated so long in seeking to blacken the character of so holy a man. For about eighteen years Dr. Creagh was confined in a dark dungeon. What most afflicted him was, that he was unable to offer up the holy sacrifice of the Mass. In order to unite more and more in spirit with the holy sacrifice as offered up throughout the whole Catholic world, he procured a missal, and with the rush light which was brought to him at his meals, he read a portion of the daily liturgy, leaving his meal till the light should be consumed. The record of his imprisonment, moreover, adds that he was accustomed to ingeniously contrive, by means of a portion of his garments, and the meat which he received, to form a sort of taper, thus adding to his bodily privations, in order to prolong for a little while his spiritual feast, and lay up a better store for heavenly contemplation. The agents of the court seeing all their efforts fruitless, and despairing of being ever able to overcome his constancy, at length put him to death by poison, in London Tower, on the 14th of October, 1585.*

Dr. Patrick O'Hely, bishop of Mayo, together with his companion, Cornelius O'Rorke, was led to the scaffold for the faith during Elizabeth's reign. This holy bishop was a native of Connaught, and from his youth was adorned with every virtue. Having embraced the religious order of St. Francis, he proceeded to Spain, and pursued his sacred studies with great applause in the university of Alcalà. In obedience to the command of the minister-general of his order, he repaired to Rome in 1575, and having resided for some time in the convent of Ara Cœli, in that city, he was proposed for the vacant see of Mayo, in the consistory of 25th June, 1576; and his nomination was confirmed by the Holy Father in the consistory of 4th of July, the same year.† Returning to Ireland, he was accompanied by Cornelius O'Rorke, a Franciscan priest, who, though the eldest son of the prince of Breffney, had abandoned all the pleasures of the world to embrace a life of prayer and poverty. They encountered many difficulties in their journey, but at length safely landed in

* Rothe, *Analect.* We reserve a lengthened notice of this glorious martyr for the "Lives of the Archbishops of Armagh."

† Ex Act. Consist.

Dingle, in the county Kerry. The heretical spies whom Drury, the lord deputy, kept at this time stationed along the southern coast of Ireland, soon recognized the venerable strangers. They were, therefore, almost immediately on landing, arrested and transmitted to Limerick, to be examined by Goulden, the military commander of that district. By his orders the prelate and his chaplain were loaded with chains and cast into the public prison. Here they remained for some months, till the arrival of sir William Drury in Kilmallock, before whom they were conducted in the month of August, 1578. On being examined, Patrick O'Hely confessed that they belonged to the Franciscan Order, that he himself was bishop of Mayo, sent by Gregory XIII. to guide and instruct his spiritual flock; this, he added, was the object of his mission, and the only motive of his return to Ireland. "And do you dare," asked Drury, "to defend the authority of the pope against the laws of the queen and parliament?" "I repeat what I have said," replied the bishop, "and I am ready, if necessary, to die for that sacred truth." Father O'Rorke replied in the same strain. Threats and promises were unavailing to change their resolution; and they both joyfully received sentence to be first put to the torture, and then to be strangled in the presence of the garrison. These orders of Drury were executed with an uncommon degree of barbarity. The two prisoners were first placed on the rack: their arms and feet were beaten with hammers; and sharp iron points and needles were cruelly thrust under their nails, which caused an extreme agony of suffering. For a considerable time they were subjected to these torments, which the holy confessors bore patiently for the love of Christ, mutually exhorting each other to constancy and perseverance. At length they were taken from the rack, and hanged from the branches of a neighbouring tree. Their bodies were left suspended there for fourteen days, and were used in the interim as a target by the brutal soldiery. When the martyr-prelate was being hurried away to execution, he turned to Drury and warned him that before many days he himself should appear before the tribunal of God, to answer for his crimes. On the fourteenth day after, this unhappy man expired in great agony in Waterford, of a

distemper that baffled every remedy.* The 22nd of August, 1578, was the day rendered illustrious by their martyrdom: by the care of the earl of Desmond, their bodies were reverently laid in the Franciscan convent of Clonmel; whence, seventy years later (in 1647), they were translated with solemnity, and deposited, together with the implements of their torture, in the convent of Askeaton.†

As to the lower order of clergy, innumerable instances are recorded by the contemporary writers, of those who laid down their lives to seal the testimony of their faith. On one occasion, no fewer than forty-two attained their crown. It was intimated in many districts of the southern province, in 1602, that such of the clergy as presented themselves to the magistrates, would be allowed to take their departure from the kingdom. Two Dominican fathers, and forty others, for the most part Cistercians and secular priests, availed themselves of the government proposal. They were ordered to assemble at the island of Inniscattery, in the vicinity of Limerick, and on the appointed day they were taken on board a war-vessel to sail for France. No sooner, however, had they put to sea than all were thrown overboard. The captain and other officers were severely reprimanded on their return to land: but this was a mere formality; for, the captain showed to his friends the royal order he had received to execute that horrid deed, and as a reward, the property of the victims was divided between those officers.‡

About 1577, whilst Drury was lord deputy, Fergal Ward, a

* Dr. Talbot, archbishop of Dublin, in his "Politician's Catechism," writes: "God's justice hath fallen visibly upon some of those judges who pronounced sentence against the Catholics, even in this world, to the astonishment of many, and repentance of very few. The memory of justice Glanville's strange wound and death by an invisible hand, is yet fresh in Lincoln. . . . Drury, the lord deputy of Ireland, was cited to appear before the throne of God's judgment within the space of fifteen days, by the venerable bishop and martyr, Patrick O'hely, of the order of St. Francis, whom he commanded to be put to death for not taking the oath of supremacy; and so it happened, for the fourteenth day Drury died of so intolerable a disease, that he cried aloud, he was tormented with all the pains of hell."

† All our annalists attest the heroic fortitude of these martyrs: O'Sullivan loc. cit. pag. 104; Rothe, *Analect.* pag. 63; *Theatre of Prot. etc.*, pag. 50; Bruodin loc. cit. pag. 437, seqq.: *Arthur a Monasterio in Martirolog. Francisc.*; *Dominicus a Rosario, etc.*

‡ O'Heyn in "*Epilog. Chronolog.*" Lovanii, 1706: pag. 18; *Hibern. Dominic.* pag. 559.

Franciscan, and a native of Donegal, was put to death in Armagh. He was venerated by the people for the simplicity of his life and his zeal for the salvation of souls. He travelled at intervals throughout the whole province of Armagh, visiting the scattered families who, in the mountainous districts, lived without the comforts of the holy sacrifice, or the strengthening graces of the sacraments. On one of these excursions he fell into the hands of the soldiery, and being scourged with great barbarity, was hanged from the branches of a tree with the cincture of his own religious habit.*

The convent of Moyne, in Mayo, was rendered illustrious in 1577, by the heroism of father O'Dowd. The soldiers of Fittón (then president of Connaught) had occupied that convent, and some of their prisoners having made their confessions to that courageous father, they seized on him, and by promises and threats, sought to induce him to reveal to them the secrets which he had heard. His refusal kindled their demoniac ferocity, and binding the cord of his habit around his head, they forced and screwed it till his eyes burst from their sockets. Under this frightful torture he expired on the 9th of June, attesting by his martyrdom the inviolability of the sacred sacramental seal.†

In the following year the religious of the same convent were informed of the approach of a party of English soldiers. They at once sought elsewhere a refuge till the tempest should pass. One venerable lay-brother, however, refused to quit the place, alleging that they would not harm one so aged as he, and that his presence in the chapel might induce them to spare that holy place. When some time had elapsed, the friars returned to Moyne. All was silent, the convent and chapel were plundered, and on the steps of the altar lay the martyred O'Hara, bathed in his blood.‡

John O'Lochran, Edmund Simmons, and Donat O'Rorke, were members of the Franciscan convent of Down. A military commissioner named Britton, and his ravaging band, resolved to fix their winter quarters in that ancient town. Their thirst for

* Synop. Prov. Franciscan. in Hib p. 66.

† Ibid. Also Mooney, Hist. MS. Ord. Francis.

‡ Mooney, loc. cit.

religious spoils soon impelled them to the convent; but the sacred vessels had been concealed, and nobody could be found. The three fathers mentioned above were their only prey. These they first subjected to a variety of torture, and then, dragging them to the adjoining garden, strangled them from the branches of a large oak that overshadowed the sanctuary.*

Thaddeus Donald and John Hanly, on the 10th of August, 1580, received their palm. They had long laboured among the suffering faithful along the south western coasts of our island. When the convent of Bantry was seized by the English troops, these holy men received the wished-for crown of martyrdom. Being conducted to a high rock impending over the sea, they were tied back to back and precipitated into the waves beneath.†

John O'Molloy, Cornelius Dogherty, and Walfrid Ferrall were also Franciscans, and about 1588 fell victims to the malice of the heretics. They spent eight years in administering the consolations of religion throughout the mountainous districts of Leinster. Many families of Carlow, Wicklow, and Wexford, had been compelled to seek a refuge there from the fury of the English troops. The good Franciscans shared in all their perils travelling about from place to place by night, they visited the sick, consoled the dying, and offered up the sacred mysteries. Oftentimes the hard rock was their only bed; but they willingly embraced nakedness, and hunger, and cold, to console their afflicted brethren. In a remote district of the Queen's County they were overtaken by a party of cavalry, bound hand and foot, and conducted with every species of insult to the garrison of Abbeyleix. Here they were flogged, and then put on the rack; at length being strangled, embowelled, and quartered, they happily yielded their souls to their Creator.‡

Gelasius O'Cullenan was born of a noble family in Connaught, and in his early years embraced the Cistercian Order. Having completed his novitiate and sacred studies in Paris,§ the monastery of Boyle was destined as the field of his labours. On his arrival in Ireland he found that the monastery, with its

* Bruodin : *Passio Mart.* p. 440.

† Bruodin, loc. cit. pag. 452.

‡ Ibid : also *Synop. Prov.* pag. 86.

§ Henriquez *Fasciculus*, etc., part i. distinct. 27, chap. 1. He devotes three chapters to the life of this Cistercian abbot.

property, had been seized on by one of the neighbouring gentry, who was sheltered in his usurpation by the edict of Elizabeth. The abbot, nothing deterred by the penal enactments which he knew impended over him, went boldly to the usurping nobleman, and admonished him of the guilt which he incurred, and the malediction of Heaven which he would assuredly draw down upon his whole family. Moved by his exhortations, the nobleman restored him to the full possession of the monastery and lands; and some time after, contemplating the holy life of its inmates and the happy fruits of their zeal, and desirous to share in their apostolate, he too renounced the world and embraced their religious institute. In 1580, Gelasius, being in Dublin, was arrested by order of the government, and together with Hugh O'Melkeran, another Cistercian father, was thrown into the public gaol. John O'Garvin,* then Protestant dean of Christ's Church, was amongst those who assisted at his first interrogatory, and having proposed many inducements to the abbot "to abandon the Popish creed," Gelasius, in reply, reproved him for preferring the deceitful vanities of this world to the lasting joys of eternity," and exhorted him "to renounce the errors and iniquity of heresy by which he had hitherto warred against God; and to make amends for the past, by joining with him in professing the name of Christ, that he might thus become worthy to receive a heavenly crown."† The holy abbot and his companion were then subjected to torture, and amongst their other sufferings, we find it commemorated that their arms and legs were broken by repeated blows, and fire was applied to their feet. The only words of Gelasius during all this torture were: "though you should offer me the principedom of England, I will not forfeit my eternal reward." Sentence of death being passed against them, they were led out with all possible ignominy to execution. They, however, were filled with consolations; the sight of the joyous sufferers excited the admiration of the assembled multitude, and many even of the heretics declared that they were more like angels than men. It was on the 21st of November, 1580, that they were happily crowned with martyrdom. The garments

* He is styled Garvey by Ware and Mant; he was soon after appointed Protestant bishop of Kilmore.

† Henriquez, loc. cit. chap. ii.; O'Sullivan, Hist. Cath. pag. 126.

which they wore, and the implements of their torture, were eagerly purchased by the Catholics, and cherished by them with religious veneration. Gelasius O'Cullenan is justly styled by the annalist of his order, "*Ordinis Cisterciensis decor, sæculi nostri splendor et totius Hiberniæ gloria.*"*

About the same time the monastery of St. Mary of Maggio, in the diocese of Limerick, became illustrious by the martyrdom of its holy inmates. An heretical band having entered the adjoining country, spreading on every side devastation and ruin, the monks of Maggio, forty in number, were in hourly expectation of death. They resolved, however, not to fly from the monastery, choosing rather to consummate their course in the asylum which had been so long their happy abode. They, therefore, assembled in choir, and having recited the morning office, in silence and prayer awaited their executioners. The heretical soldiers did not long delay; on coming to the monastery, they at first imagined that it had been abandoned—so universal was the silence that reigned around it; and they plundered it in every part. On arriving, however, at the church, they found the forty religious kneeling around the altar, unmoved, as if unconscious of the scenes of sacrilegious plunder that were perpetrated around them, and wholly absorbed in prayer. "Like hungry wolves, the heretics at once precipitated themselves upon the defenceless religious. The cruelty and ferocity of the soldiers was only surpassed by the meekness and heavenly joy of the victims," and in a few instants forty names were added to the long roll of our Irish saints. The vigil of the Assumption was the day consecrated by their death. One lay-brother of the monastery who had been absent for some time, returned that evening, and found his former happy abode reduced to a heap of smoking ruins, and entering the church he found the altar and choir streaming with blood. Throwing himself prostrate before the mutilated statue of our Lady, he poured forth his lamentations, that her monastery was no more, and that her glorious festival, which should be then commenced, would pass in sadness and silence. He had scarcely breathed his prayer, when he heard the bells of the monastery to toll,

* Henriquez, loc. cit. chap. i.

and lifting his head, he saw his martyred brethren, each taking his accustomed seat: the abbot intoned the solemn vespers, and the psalms were sung as was usual on their festive days. The angels and the Queen of heaven joined their voices with those of their now sainted companions; the enraptured lay-brother knew not whether he had been assumed to heaven, or was still on earth, till the office being completed, the vision ceased, and he once more contemplated around him the mangled and bleeding remains of the martyred religious.* Henriquez concludes his narrative of their triumph with the impressive words: "Oh, happy Ireland, that is enriched with the treasure of so many martyrs! oh, happy community, that sent forth so many intercessors to the heavenly throne!"

The annalists of the Cistercian Order commemorate many other instances of the heroism displayed by its Irish fathers, in encountering all the torments that heretical fury could devise, rather than betray their sacred character. Amongst them was Nicholas Fitzgerald of Limerick, who, under lord Gray, being discovered in a wood in which he had for some time concealed himself, was loaded with chains, and transmitted to Dublin Castle. There he was condemned to death, and for the faith suffered with heroic constancy the penalty of treason.

But it is time to mention some few instances of the secular clergy who nobly emulated the fortitude of the religious, and by their sacred heroism, added new lustre to the cause of faith, and won an imperishable fame for our "martyred isle."

Daniel O'Niell was a priest of the diocese of Cloyne, and endured a most peculiar martyrdom on the 28th of March, 1580. He was a most apostolic man, full of attention to the wants of the poor, and of solicitude for all his flock. He was no sooner arrested and conducted under a military guard to Youghal, than two wicked men, named Norris and Morgan, undertook the task of his execution. They conducted him to the summit of Trinity Tower, and having fastened a rope around his waist and arms, precipitated him from the battlements. The rope not being

* Henriquez, loc. cit. part ii. distinct. 37. This work was written in the first years of the seventeenth century. The same martyrdom and miraculous vision is recorded by Henriquez, in "Sanctoral Cisterc." printed in Valladolid, 1613, and also by the Irish Seminary of Seville, in "Persecut. Hibernic." printed in 1619.

sufficiently strong to resist the shock, the holy man fell mangled and almost lifeless to the ground. The fury of his executioners, however, was not allayed: observing that life was not yet extinct, they caused him to be dragged to a mill not far distant, where they tied him to the water-wheel; his lacerated body in a few minutes was wholly disfigured, and scarcely retained the semblance of human remains.

Maurice Scanlan, Philip O'Shea, and Daniel O'Hanrichan, were three secular priests, and natives of Kerry. For more than thirty years they had been indefatigable in their labours, in their native county and the surrounding territory. It was in the town of Lislaghton that they received the crown of martyrdom. Whilst the country around was laid waste by the agents of persecution, they hastened to the sanctuary to offer themselves as victims for their suffering flock. They were soon discovered there by the enemy, and immediately beheaded. The 6th of April, 1580, was the day of their happy triumph.

Maurice Kinrehan, P.P. of Mullanahone, in Tipperary, in a special manner attracted the rage of the heretics, and was compelled to take shelter, together with numbers of his flock, on the wild summits of Slievenamon. Rewards were more than once offered for his arrest, and his parish was frequently scoured by military parties, anxious to seize on their prey. At length, whilst engaged in administering the last sacraments to a dying man, he was overtaken by his pursuers, who at once hurried him towards Clonmel. Before arriving in that town, the officer of the guard, named Furrows, fearing lest the inhabitants might rescue the venerable captive, gave orders to have him despatched: the soldiers treated him with great brutality, and hewing his body into fragments, scattered his mangled members along the highway, and brought his head as a trophy to the commander in Clonmel.*

The agents of persecution were not always so successful in leading their intended victims to the scaffold. An amusing instance is recorded by O'Sullivan Beare. In a small town near Drogheda the Protestant minister occasioned great annoyance to the Catholics by his pursuit of their only priest, and by

* Bruodin, *loc. cit.* ; also *Analecta*.

continually insisting on all the baptisms, and other sacred rites, being performed in his presence. One of the chief Catholics having died, they resolved on having the holy sacrifice offered up, and then interring the corpse in the country farm-house that served them for a chapel. The body of the deceased was conducted thither at night and the grave was dug; at morning's dawn the priest commenced the holy sacrifice, at which none but the women had assembled, the better to allay the suspicions of their Protestant neighbours. The minister, however, had been fully informed by his spies of all the arrangements that were made, and, long before the arrival of the priest, had concealed himself beneath the temporary altar. No sooner had the priest raised the chalice at the communion, than, rushing from his hiding place, he seized the chalice, and laying hold also of the priest, told him that he was arrested by her majesty's command. The assembled women could not brook this outrage, and seizing on the minister, dragged him to the empty grave, and throwing him headlong in, commenced to inter him, heaping the clay and stones upon him. It was only when the minister had solemnly called God to witness that he would never more interfere with their sacred rites, that the priest's intercession was effectual, and that the culprit was released from his premature grave.*

The abbot of the Cistercian monastery called the White Friars, in Donegal, was a member of the great family of O'Donnell, and closely allied to its celebrated chieftain, *Hugh Ruadh*. Having refused to surrender his monastery, it was suppressed by the queen's commissioners; the abbot himself was proclaimed a traitor, and a reward offered for his head. He fled to Iar-Connaught, and found a secure asylum at the foot of *Cnoc-a-Caillean* hill, in the parish of *Moyne*, near the sea-shore, where a martello tower now stands. It was only after a long search that the abbot's retreat was discovered. Fourteen persons undertook to apprehend him, and entered at night his place of concealment. He was engaged in prayer, but was instantly seized, and the captors only waited for the morning to bear away the prisoner, and secure the promised reward. A

* Hist. Cath., pag. 135-6.

bold expedient suggested itself to the defenceless abbot. He informed his greedy captors that all he possessed was concealed in the small uninhabited island of Cruaghnaakeely, which he told them was only at a short distance, and could be seen from the shore. They readily consented to accompany him thither, sure of his person, and expecting to find there the sacred plate of the monastery. When they reached the island, he directed one of the men to step on the rock, which formed its only landing-place, and to lay hold of a rope which was attached to the bow of the boat. This done, he placed himself at the bow, and, with a setting-pole, kept the boat steady until all were safely landed; then slipping the rope and giving a sudden shove, the water being very deep, he was in an instant out of reach, and directed his course back, leaving the entire party of his pursuers on that desolate island, where, being destitute of food and shelter, they all miserably perished. On the summit of the island are still to be seen some heaps of stones which, as tradition records, were raised a few years after by the neighbouring inhabitants to cover their remains.*

Sometimes it was even an immediate interposition of Providence that preserved the clergy to their devoted flocks. Father Henry Fitzsimons relates how a gentleman named Richard Bellings, living at Dunamore, about seven miles from Dublin, was brought to trial in 1580

“By Robert Cocles, a blood-thirsty monster, for having harboured Patrick Nigram, a priest. At that very time the priest was concealed in his house, and a band of soldiers was despatched to besiege and examine it; meanwhile the Blessed Virgin appeared to Mrs. Bellings, and addressed to her the following words: Without a moment's delay send for Nigram and place him in the lower cellar, where, by removing a stone which is in the corner, he can descend a few steps farther down. Though Mrs. Bellings heard these words repeated more than once, she thought it was only a dream, and paid no attention to them. At last the most august Queen of Heaven revealed herself in the most beautiful form, and clothed with dazzling radiance, ordered her to instantly execute the command which she received. Father Nigram was a man of no ordinary piety, of spotless integrity, and always burning with an ardent zeal for religion; I made it my duty to visit him before his death, and to get from his own lips the most accurate information on a

* Hardiman's *Iar-Connaught*, published by I. A. Society, 1846, p. 102-3.

matter about which I had already heard so much from different quarters. On removing the stone he saw five or six steps which led down to a small but convenient bed-chamber, twenty feet long and twelve feet broad, and furnished with a neat bed and chair. He was scarcely shut up in this cell when the priest-hunters arrived, and searched every corner of the house, but all to no purpose; for three days they continued their toilsome search, and then departed, goaded almost to madness by the loss of their expected prey. Nigram, who during all this time had been favoured with the choicest consolations of heaven, came forth from his subterraneous cell, and the passage, when covered with the stone, could never afterwards be discovered; even after the most diligent search, not a trace of it could be found.”*

6.—*Constancy of the Irish Catholics.*

In a former chapter,† we have seen how the smiles of court favour did not suffice, in the beginning of Elizabeth's reign, to allure the Irish Catholics to embrace the tenets of the reformed creed. It now becomes our task to examine how far penal enactments and the terrors of the sword were successful in alienating our people from the cherished doctrines of the Catholic faith. We confidently assert, that the church of our fathers shone with brighter lustre at the close, than at the beginning of Elizabeth's reign; and that the trials and persecutions to which our clergy and people were subjected, only served to render more dear to them the saving truths which they professed, whilst the finger of the Most High once more renewed in our island, that manifestation of His power which consoled the early church—“sanguis martyrum semen Christianorum:” “The blood of martyrs was the seed of Christians.”

In 1590 “the general backwardness of the Protestant religion in Ireland” became an anxious subject of consideration in the privy council of her majesty, and letters were despatched to the lord deputy, demanding an explanation of the reproachful fact, that hitherto all the hopes of the reformers had been blighted in our island. Dr. Adam Loftus, Protestant archbishop of Dublin, and chancellor of Ireland, was commissioned to

* *Consolatoria ad Hib. Epist. ad calcem refutationis. Rideri. pag. 93. Cambrensis Eversus, vol. iii., p. 121.*

† See chap. ii. 4.

reply. This letter is dated the 22nd of September, 1590; and whilst he acknowledges the fact, that the whole kingdom was devoted to the Catholic faith, he excuses it by endeavouring to cast its blame on his mortal enemy, the former lord deputy, sir John Perrott. It is addressed to lord Burghley, and is as follows:—

“IT MAY PLEASE YOUR GOOD LORDSHIP,—I have lately been made partaker of your lordship's letter to my special good lord, the lord deputy, wherein you lament the general corruption of this realm in the cause of religion, and do wish his lordship and myself to enter into some speedy consideration how the same may be remedied. I am thereby emboldened, humbly craving your lordship's good acceptation, both at large to discover unto you the means and degrees by which this people are fallen into this general revolt, and to signify my opinion how they may be reduced to better conformity. And looking back unto the times past, I cannot forbear to inform your lordship of that which in my experience I know to be true: that although there hath been in this people a general disposition to popery, as to a thing wherein they are misled from their cradle; yet, this general recusancy is of but six years' continuance at the most, and began in the second year of sir John Perrott's government, in the beginning of the parliament holden by him. Before which time, I well remember and do assure your lordship, there were not in the pale the number of twelve recusant gentlemen of account; but since then they have grown to such obstinacy and boldness, that it is to be feared (if some speedy remedy be not provided), upon pretence of religion, they will shake off all duty and obedience. Before that time they were restrained by the ecclesiastical commission, and, howsoever they were affected inwardly in their consciences, yet outwardly they showed great duty and obedience, in resorting to service and sermons, and in receiving of the communion.

In the beginning of the parliament, sir Nicholas White, in the name of his countrymen, moved sir John Perrott, with sundry reasons, before the most of this council, to permit this people to have liberty of their consciences, and the free use of their religion, wherein they had been bred and brought up; assuring sir John that granting that unto them, they would not only condescend to the repeal of Poyning's Act, but to any other reasonable motion which should be propounded in the parliament. His good success with the lord deputy at that time moved another of his country, one Edward Nugent, a lawyer, to come into the lower house with a premeditated speech in defence of the Mass and Romish religion, declaring the good success her majesty's progenitors had whilst they embraced the Mass and the Catholic religion, as he termed it, and the bad success which pursued the rejecting thereof.

* Extracted from State Paper Office, London.

“By these encouragements, and by the bad example of some great personages of credit in this state, this people hath ever since grown to wonderful obstinacy, and therein do persist unto this day increasing in malice beyond all measure and utter detestation of religion. When we, the bishop of Dublin, Meath, and a few others, well affected, perceived this declination, being authorized by her majesty's high commission for ecclesiastical causes, we assembled before us the principal gentlemen, and such as we knew to be ringleaders in this cause, seeking to draw them to better conformity; but so soon as they came before us, we were forbidden by the then lord deputy to deal with them, who told us (but in truth never showed the same) that he had received direction from their lordships that this people should not be dealt with for matters of religion, and so we were restrained from proceeding any further. And presently it was bruited throughout the pale, that her majesty's pleasure was that they should not be touched for their religion, but should be permitted to use the same at their pleasure; and so they did during the time of sir John's government, wherein they took such heart and grew to such obstinacy, that now they can hardly be reclaimed, the rather because those noblemen and principal gentlemen, by their bad examples, do daily draw them backward from the service of God established by her majesty.

“And sorry I am that, for the discharge of my duty, I must be forced to note unto your lordship one particular man well known unto your lordship, whose example doth of all others greatest hurt in the pale; I mean sir Luke Dillon, who, although he is both a most grave and wise councillor, and of great experience in this state, yet his notorious recusancy and wilful absenting of himself from the church these three or four years past (being drawn to this backwardness by his son-in-law Mr. Rotchfort, a most malicious and dangerous instrument, both against religion and this government), is a special provocation, and means to draw the greatest number of this people into that general corruption wherein they live. For redress whereof your lordship hath most wisely considered that the sword alone without the word is not sufficient. But yet I assure your lordship their obstinacy now is such, that unless they be enforced, they will not ever come to hear the word preached, as by experience we observed at the time appointed by the lord deputy and council for a general assembly of all the noblemen and gentlemen of every county, after her majesty's good success against the Spaniard, to give God thanks for the same; at which time, notwithstanding, the sheriff of every county did their duties with all diligence, and warned all men to repair to the principal church in every county wherein order was taken for public prayers and thanksgiving unto God, together with a sermon to be preached by choice men in every diocese, yet very few or none almost resorted thereunto; but even in Dublin itself, the lawyers in term-time took occasion to leave the town, on purpose to absent themselves from that godly exercise, so betraying in themselves, besides their corruption in religion, great want of duty and loyalty unto her

majesty, and giving just occasion unto us to conceive a doubtful opinion of them.

“For preachers (God be thanked) my cathedral church and those civil dioceses here about are pretty well furnished; but it is almost a bootless labour for any man to preach in the country out of Dublin for want of hearers, the people are grown to so general a revolt; which, nevertheless, is not so far gone but, in my opinion, it may be easily remedied, without any danger and with great gain to her majesty, if the ecclesiastical commission be restored and put in action; for this people are but poor and fear to be fined—if liberty be left to myself and such commissioners as are well affected in religion to imprison and fine all such as are obstinate and disobedient; and if they persist, being men of ability, to bear their own charges, to send them into England for example sake. This course of reformation, the sooner it is begun the better it will prosper; and the longer it is deferred the more dangerous will it be. All which I leave to your lordship’s wise consideration, and so most humbly craving pardon for my wonted boldness, I commend your good lordship with my prayers to God’s best blessings.

“From Rathfarnham, this 22nd Sept., 1590,

“Your lordship’s humbly at command,

“ADAM DUBLINENSIS.

“To the Right Hon. my singular good Lord
the Lord Burghley, Lord Treasurer of
England.”

We gladly accept the precious acknowledgements which this letter of Dr. Loftus presents to us, that forsooth the Irish were from their cradle devoted to the Holy See, and, beyond all measure, displayed their *utter detestation* of the reformed church. His secondary assertion, that all this had its origin only in 1584, will be but little credited by those who have read the preceding chapters. It is, in fact, inconsistent with his own letters, repugnant to the repeated declaration of the ecclesiastical commissioners, and proved to be false by all the mass of evidence as to the state of the Irish Church, which we presented to the reader in the account of Dr. Curwin.

4. Whilst Dr. Loftus acknowledges the utter discomfiture of Protestantism in our island, he seeks to attach its blame to his own mortal enemy; but sir John Perrott, though under sentence of death, and imprisoned in the Tower, rebutted well this accusation, declaring that he was more successful in suppressing

religious houses, expelling the clergy from the kingdom, and checking the growth of popery, than any of his predecessors.*

The documents connected with the Desmond war, prove that the whole kingdom was then devoted to the ancient faith. The description of Ireland presented to the Holy See in 1581, represents the whole nation as Catholic.† Dr. Sanders, a few years earlier, commemorates our countrymen as distinguished for their devotion to the Catholic faith,‡ and, as we have seen, a Vatican MS. of 1579 speaks of the inhabitants, even of the capital, as having, from the commencement of Elizabeth's reign, unswervingly maintained their allegiance to the Holy See.

It would be easy to multiply citations from writers who attest the devoted attachment of Ireland to the faith during the whole period of Elizabeth's reign; we, however, shall be satisfied to commemorate a few facts which, perhaps, are more eloquent than words, in manifesting the religious sentiments of our people.

1. In the first year of Elizabeth, it was enacted that the oath of supremacy should be taken by all who were assumed to any civic office; nevertheless, throughout the long period of her government, the cities and corporate towns everywhere rejected the Protestant oath, and, in regard of religion, continued to use the oath of the Catholic times, condemnatory of all heretics and heresies.§

2. Amongst the orders issued by sir John Perrott, preparatory to the parliament of 1584-5, there was one which prohibited any of its members from dressing in the Irish fashion. To facilitate their assuming the English habit, the lord deputy bestowed both gowns and cloaks of velvet and satin on any that were unwilling to purchase them. One of the Irish chieftains felt special reluctance to abandon the costume of his ancestors: "The whole nation (said he) will be filled with laughter at an O'Neil appearing in public dressed in English apparel." When the lord deputy insisted on his complying, the chieftain solicited that at least one favor might be granted to him, forsooth, that a Protestant minister should accompany him dressed in

* See his "last will and testament," made in the Tower, 3rd May, 1592: History of sir John Perrott, pag. 30, seqq.

† See chap. iii. sec. 4.

‡ In his work, 'De Schism. Anglic.' written in 1579.

§ Pet. Lomb. Comment. de Reg. Hib.; see supr. sec. 1.

Irish garments; for thus, he added, the mirth and amazement of the multitude will be divided between us.*

3. One of the few who followed the attractions of this world, and bowed to the spiritual headship of queen Elizabeth, was Miler Magrath, bishop of Down and Connor. His royal mistress sought by dignities and honors to silence the reproaches of his conscience, and the archbishopric of Cashel and other ecclesiastical preferments were heaped on him in profusion. So far, however, was this change of spiritual allegiance from securing to him the sympathy and affection of his countrymen, that he became an outcast amongst his own kindred, and an object of abhorrence to all. In 1593 he addressed a letter to Cecil lamenting his sad fate, an extract from which letter may serve to illustrate our present subject: "I find myself so hardly beset and overwhelmed with the general unbridled multitude there (in Ireland), notorious Papists, and reconciled to the Pope and the king of Spain, very few of them escaping the whip of my censuring discoveries, that they all have joined hearts and hands together, to overthrow and destroy my poor self, well known to be, of that country birth, the only eye-sore and chiefest preventer and detector of all their mischievous practices. My case resting thus, what other remedy might be left me in such an hourly-expected danger, remaining safe neither in country nor town, at home nor abroad, no, not in my church or chapter house, than for safe-guard of my poor innocent life, thus infinitely and by infinite means sought after, to appeal to the uncorrupted seat of justice and sanctuary of all afflicted subjects, her majesty and honorable council?"†

4. The history of James, seventeenth earl of Desmond, affords us another instance of the utter horror of the Irish people for all who were infected with the reformed tenets. He had spent well nigh thirty years as hostage and captive in the hands of the English, and had imbibed, under their tuition, the Protestant creed. Towards the close of this century, the English power had well nigh been totally overthrown in the south of Ireland, and its lord president Carew pitifully wrote to sir

* Life of sir John Perrott, p. 198-9.

† Miler Magrath to sir Robert Cecil, dated London, June 8, 1593. St. Pap. Office.

Robert Cecil, "whosoever knoweth this kingdom and the people will confess, that to conquer the same and them by the sword only, may be said to be impossible; and I do verily believe, that all the treasure of England will be consumed in that work, unless other additions of help be ministered unto it. The fair way that I am in, towards the finishing of the heavy task which I undergo, will, I am afraid, receive some speedy and rough impediment, unless my advice, in sending of the young Desmond hither, may be followed."* Cecil at once recommended to her majesty the liberation of the earl; and in the month of October, 1600, we find him in charge of trusty English agents† setting sail from Bristol for the Irish shores. One scene alone of his Irish sojourn attracts our attention. It was on a Saturday evening that he arrived in Kilmallock. At his entry into the town, "there was a mighty concourse of people," says sir George Carew, "insomuch that all the streets, doors, and windows—yea, the very gutters and tops of the houses, were so filled with them, as if they came to see one whom God had sent to be that comfort and delight which their hearts and souls most desired; and they welcomed him with all the expressions and signs of joy, every one throwing upon him wheat and salt (an ancient ceremony used in that province), as a prediction of future peace and plenty. That night the earl was invited to supper to sir George Thornton's, who then kept his house in Kilmallock; and although the earl had a guard of soldiers, who lined the way from his lodgings to sir George Thornton's house, yet the confluence of people that flocked thither to see him was so great, as in half an hour he could not make his passage through the crowd; and after supper he had the like encounters at his return to his lodging. The next day being Sunday, the earl went to church to hear Protestant service, and all the way his country-people used loud and rude dehortations to keep him from church, to which he lent a deaf ear; but after service and the sermon were ended, the earl coming forth from the church,

* St. Pap. Off., published in Dublin Review, August 1861, p. 516-7.

† The instructions given to these agents were, in case he was found not to be of any service in Ireland, to take him off by poison, or otherwise hire agents to swear counts of treason against him.—See letter of Cecil to Carew, Oct. 8, 1600, and the other documents from State Paper Office, in Dub. Rev. loc. cit. p. 526.

was railed at and spat upon by those that before his going to church were so desirous to see and salute him; insomuch, that after that public expression of his religion, the town was cleared of that multitude of strangers, and the earl from thenceforward might walk as quietly and freely in the town, as little in effect followed or regarded, as any other private gentleman. This true relation I make, that all men may observe how hateful our religion and the professors thereof are to the ruder and ignorant sort of people in that kingdom; for, from thenceforward, none of his father's followers, except some few of the meaner sort of freeholders, resorted unto him. The truth is, his religion, being a Protestant, was the only cause that bred this coyness in them all; for, if he had been a Romish Catholic, the hearts and knees of all degrees in the province would have bowed unto him.”*

5. In the close of Elizabeth's reign, captain George Flower, commanding the English forces, “understanding that the castle of Cloghan was guarded by the rebels, and that in the same there was a Catholic priest lately come from Rome,”† hastened to assault it. He had in his hands as hostage Donnell Dorrogh, brother of the commander of the fortress, and on their refusal to surrender, he threatened to hang him in their sight; nevertheless, “to save the priest, whose life they tendered, they persevered obstinately not to yield; whereupon captain Flower, in their sight, hanged the commander's brother.” Four days later, the priest having been shifted away in safety, the garrison surrendered as prisoners of war. Sir George Carew having commemorated this fact, adds: “I do relate this event to the end the reader may the more clearly see in what reverence and estimation these ignorant superstitious Irish do hold a popish priest, in regard of whose safety the commander was content to suffer his brother to perish.”‡

6. Scarce had the news of Elizabeth's death been whispered through the cities of Ireland, than the inhabitants without delay hastened to the cathedral and parochial churches, purified the sanctuary, and restored the ancient worship in all its splendour. The bells sent forth a joyous peal, solemn *Te Deums* were

* Pacata Hibernia, pp. 163-4.

† Ibid. p. 646.

‡ Ibid. p. 647.

intoned, and the people once more exulted (though their joy was to be of short duration) in the uncontrolled display of their Catholic feeling.*

These facts must place in the boldest relief the devotedness and affection for the ancient faith, cherished amidst so many perils by the people of Ireland, during the whole period of Elizabeth's reign. This, indeed, was so remarkable, that the persecuting viceroy, sir Arthur Chichester, was heard repeatedly to exclaim "that he knew not how this attachment to the Catholic faith was so deeply rooted in the hearts of the Irish, unless it were that the very soil was infected and the air tainted with Popery; for they obstinately prefer it to all things else—to allegiance to their king, to respect for his ministers, to the care of their own posterity, and to all their hopes and prospects."†

The example of the Catholics seems to have even exercised a salutary influence on their persecutors, and it is recorded that many of the Protestant families embraced the saving tenets of our holy Church. "As soon as Protestant settlers fix their abode in Ireland," writes the learned author of *Cambrensis Eversus*, "they for the most part embrace Catholicity, or at least their children renounce the heretical doctrines imbibed from their parents, and enter the saving fold of the Catholic Church;" and he adds, regarding the constancy of our people during Elizabeth's reign:

* We shall have to commemorate this fact again in another chapter, when we shall give the authorities for it in full. See, in the interim, Smith's History of Cork, also History of Waterford, and Fitzgerald's History of Limerick, vol. ii. p. 219, etc.

† *Analecta*, p. 203; *Cambrensis Eversus*, vol. ii. p. 605. Spenser, in 1596, writes: "The natives of Ireland be all Papists by profession." (View, &c. pag. 137.) McGeoghegan asserts, that during the reigns of Henry VIII., Edward VI., Elizabeth, and James I. not sixty of the Irish embraced the Protestant religion. (*Histoire d'Irlande*, vol. iii. pag. 422.) The Protestant bishop of Ferns in 1612, in a report to the crown on the obstinacy of the Papists, says, that having interrogated some of the poorer class "why they did not forsake the Mass and come to our church, their answer was, that if they should be of our religion, no popish merchant would employ them, being sailors; no popish landlord would let them any lands, being husbandmen; nor set them houses in tenantry, being artificers. As for the gentlemen and those of the richer sort, I have always found them very obstinate, which hath proceeded from the priests resorting unto their houses and company, and continually hammering them upon their superstitious anvil." (Reports of Com. of Pub. Rec. in Irel. vol. i, pag. 264.) Dr. Kearney, archbishop of Cashel in 1609, officially reported to the Holy See: "*Vix millesimus quisque ex ipsa natione Hibernica labe hæreseos notatur.*"

"so deeply was the Catholic faith rooted in their hearts, that though the plebeians were transplanted, the rich severely taxed, the gentry harassed, the nobles insulted, the cities and towns despoiled of their rights and privileges, the whole nation trampled on, the natives deprived of their offices, honors, and dignities, wealth and honors monopolized by foreign professors of heresy, and the resources of the country drained; religion derided as superstition, fidelity to God denounced as treason; constancy in the faith branded as obstinacy and rebellion; yet, not all these, nor any other engines of terror or ruin, nor smiles of conciliation, could ever sever them from the fond embraces of the Catholic Church."*

Dr. Roothe also attests the conversion of many of the English to the Catholic faith. "Though the authority of the Pope," he says, "was proscribed and condemned by all the public authorities and tribunals; yet no violence could extinguish, nor fear obliterate, the ardent attachment to the Vicar of Christ which is deeply imprinted on the hearts of this people. Laws, discipline, and forms of government have been changed; but wherever they interfered with religion, no violence or artifice could induce the people to adopt them. Knavery was employed to deceive, seduction to allure, insult to provoke, intrigue to solicit, threats to terrify, rewards to conciliate. They oppress and they promise; they chalk out their approach, and seize all the avenues; they ply both the mine and the battery,—all machines are employed, but in vain; they do not advance one inch; and they are rather converted to us than we to them. And this it was that excited the admiration of that cunning statesman, the pilot of English policy under Elizabeth, sir William Cecil, who, filled with amazement at the immovable constancy of the Irish, declared that it was labour in vain to seek to unite Ireland with the British Church, since the ministers who were sent to attain that end not only were devoid of success, but were rather themselves converted by the Irish to the Catholic faith."†

Dr. Lombard, archbishop of Armagh, gives some further

* Cambrensis Eversus, loc. cit., page 607.

† *Analecta*, p. 202, printed in 1617.

interesting details as to the Catholic influence thus exercised on the heretical agents by our suffering church :*

“Notwithstanding all the arts employed by the magistrates during so many years, to lead the natives of Ireland to schism and heresy, the Catholic spirit remains pure and untainted; and the few who were seduced into the path of error, found themselves detested by none more than by their own countrymen, and none pursued them with greater enmity than those of their own families and kindred. . . . And here we may reflect on the wonderful and merciful designs of Providence, which so succoured our church in these days of its greatest trial, that our people have become better instructed and more and more constant in all that regards religion;† nor has this progress been confined to the knowledge of religion,—it extended also to the practices of faith; and many are not wanting at the present day, who realize in their lives the continence and austerity of the early saints. . . . The learned and eloquent Scotch and English preachers who were sent thither to avert the Catholics from the faith, after all their pains and toil, reaped so small a harvest, or rather found their hands so wholly empty, that on their return to England they often publicly avowed in their sermons that they had wasted so many years in useless labour in Ireland, without being able, as they said, to convert those obstinate papists to the evangelical doctrines. Lest, however, they might seem to have lost all charity for that people, they occasionally, with all seriousness, exhorted their auditors to pray that the Gospel light, which so happily illumined England, might be extended to the benighted kingdom of Ireland, for God alone could realize that end, in seeking which all human efforts had hitherto been employed in vain. The professors, likewise, in the new university were so disappointed in their projects, that very soon after their undertaking to teach heresy in Dublin, their preaching was found to be so obnoxious and odious to the citizens, that the very heretical magistrates, fearing a tumult, found it necessary to impose silence on the preachers. And when they commenced in like manner to exact the oath of spiritual

* *Commentarius*, etc., cap. xx. The reader will hold in mind that this work was written in the year 1600.

† In another place (cap. xii.), Dr. Lombard repeats this fact : “*Quod præcipuum omnium meretur laudem et hoc maxime tempore consideratione summa, immo et admiratione dignum est, hic passim omnes tametsi alioquin educatione et moribus alii ab aliis multum differentes, adeo sunt tenaces atque observantes orthodoxæ religionis ut cum ab annis jam compluribus nihil non tentatum sit quâ vi et fraude, qua timore hominum et amore mundi ut ad schisma et hæresim abriperentur, tantum tamen abest ut hoc sit consequutum quod potius et quidem occasione sumptâ ex ipsa quam interea passi sunt oppositione et oppressione longe melius nunc instructi de dogmatibus et mysteriis Catholicæ religionis, etiam multo constantiores sint effecti in ea retinenda immo audaciores multo in eadem defendenda et asserenda.*”

supremacy from the youths that frequented their lectures, this was so abhorred by the Irish, that though they anxiously desired instruction for their children, yet they rather chose that they should remain in ignorance, retaining the integrity of their faith, than that with literature they should imbibe the fatal corruption of heresy."

In 1597 father Henry Fitzsimons landed on our Irish shores. He was a native of Dublin, and one of those whom the example of the suffering Catholics brought back to the saving fold. After more than twenty years incessant labour, he published to the world a eulogy of our Irish Catholics, of which any nation might be justly proud: He never witnessed (he writes) greater tenacity of the ancient faith amidst so many storms of persecution; greater veneration for religion where pastors were so few, and wolves so numerous and so ferocious; or a more profound knowledge of the principles of faith, even when its teachers were banished, and all the aids of books and instructions proscribed.* "It is almost incredible (he adds), but yet a most indubious fact, that during full sixty years (*i. e.* from the beginning of Elizabeth's reign) neither the most atrocious penalties, nor the most tempting rewards, have been able to seduce into the ranks of heresy more than two hundred persons in that whole kingdom.† Who could ever anticipate that even the lowest order of the people, most of them ignorant, would renounce fortune, liberty, and life, rather than walk for one instant in the council of the ungodly, or pursue the path of sinners? . . . Who could believe that the respectable persons of every rank and sex would prefer the most pinching poverty, in the cause of their holy faith, to the most splendid fortune, granted as a reward of external conformity to the established religion?"‡

We shall conclude this article with the words of Dr. Lynch, who, after commemorating the trials of our people during Elizabeth's persecution, writes:—

* This sentiment is repeated by O'Sullivan Beare, *Historiæ Cath.*, pag. 133: confer also pag. 139.

† All authorities agree as to the small number of the natives that embraced the Protestant tenets. In a rare pamphlet—"Ireland's Case Briefly Stated"—printed in 1695, pag. 6, it is stated: "Not one in five hundred of the natives was then Protestant, or became so during queen Elizabeth's reign."

‡ "Britannomachia Ministrorum," etc. lib. iii., pag. 332; printed at Douay in 1614.

"Of all the countries of Europe subject to heretical kings, there is not one in which a greater number of subjects have persevered in the old faith, and in obedience to the sovereign pontiff, than in Ireland. Cardinal Bentivoglio has truly observed, *that the Irish would seem to have sucked in the Catholic faith with their mother's milk.* In other countries smitten with heresy, the majority followed the example of the king or other governing power of the state, and renounced the old faith and the supremacy of the pope; but in Ireland, I do not hesitate to assert, that not the tenth, nor the hundredth, no, nor the thousandth part, revolted from the faith of their fathers to the camp of the heretics.* Orlandinus might say, with perfect truth, *that the Irish had preserved in heart and soul the Catholic faith in all its integrity, and the most devoted obedience to the Roman pontiff.* And Bozius also: *as far as we can judge from history, not one of all the northern nations has been more constant in the profession of the one faith.* May I not then apply to the Irish what Virgil sang regarding the Romans:—

Let others better mould the running mass
Of metals, and inform the breathing brass;
And soften into flesh a marble face:
Plead better at the bar, describe the skies,
And when the stars descend, and when they rise:
But, Erin, be it thine, mark well, I pray,
Thy faith to hold, Christ's Vicar to obey."†

* As a specimen how the constancy of our Catholics was esteemed on the continent, we add an extract from "La Spada d'Orione," by Primo Damascino, printed in Rome, 1680. After stating that the Catholics sought a refuge on the mountain-tops, he continues, "dalla fermezza di quei monti apprendeano essi ad essere immobili nella difesa della religione Romana, e dalla costanza di essi fra gli urti delle tempeste et i patimenti dei ghiacci godeano d'imparare quella imperturbabilità di cuore con cui doveano ricevere le persecuzioni della Eresia," etc.

† Camb. Evers., vol. ii. pag. 613-5. transl., by Rev. Dr. M. Kelly, Dublin, 1848.

Since writing the above, the *Hibernian Magazine* (October, 1863) has published an interesting document from the Public Record Office, London; being a letter addressed from Waterford, in 1585, to the Protestant archbishop of Armagh, Dr. Long, by the schoolmaster who, a little while before, had been sent thither to instruct the natives in both science and religion. We shall give a few extracts to show what progress Protestantism had made in Ireland up to that period:—

"I wrote unto your honor of late, desiring an answer to satisfy me for two especial causes, which moved me to write; the one, that I understood that your honor was offended with me; the other was to desire your honor's assistance, in this place where it pleased your honor to place me, against a number of professed enemies of God and good men, although outwardly a few of them make some hypocritical show, yet their lives, for the most part, show the contrary; so that I have not seen nor heard of the like contempt of the word of God, and manifest resistance of her majesty's proceedings, no not in the whole island. . . .

"First, there is not one couple among twenty married according to her majesty's injunctions, but handfasted only, or else married at home with a Mass: then they never christen their children, but in their house, either with a

7.—*Condition of the Protestant Church.*

To the consoling series of facts which we enumerated in the last article, another series must now succeed quite different in character, disclosing to us the features of the newly-intruded church, which claimed the veneration and affections of our Irish people. Whilst the sanctuaries of our fathers were laid waste, and our holy religion was reviled as superstition and

mass-priest, or for want of him (which commonly the wealthiest of them do not want), the women themselves christen. Their dead they bury not if they can choose, but tumble them into the graves without any word of service or any minister, the proof whereof I myself have seen very often even before the school-door, to my great grief: and as for themselves altogether, they either abuse the word, or absent themselves from the church, or when they come there, they walk round about like mill-horses, shopping and changing and making merchandize, and in such a manner, that they who are in the choir and willing to hear, through their babbling, cannot hear a word; and yet they are not small fools, but even the chief persons of the city. . . .

"The ministers cry out that they are abused, deceived, despised, and almost discomfited, and for this especially, that they being constrained to send up a true certificate of such as frequented not the church, nor received communion, their certificate was presently shown to their enemies, who returned home with open jaws and foaming mouths, reviled the ministers with such opprobrious terms as men of their profession use to do, that they, poor shepherds, for fear of those brutish and savage lions, are almost afraid to come near the sheepfold. It was little credit for him who showed it to them, for even they themselves know what his drift is, forsooth either to be wrapped in a mantle, or cloaked with a caddow, or made drunk with aqua-vitæ. . . .

"Since my coming hither I had not above thirty scholars, which was no small grief unto me, especially being sent hither by you: the cause why they received me was rather for fear, than for any desire they had to have their children instructed in the fear of God and knowledge of good letters, which I soon perceived by them; for within one month, most of them took away their children from me, and sent them to other tutors in the town that were professed Papists. . . . The reason they alleged why they took them away from me was, that they did not profit in their studies; neither did they indeed in what they looked for; for I constrained them to come to service, which they could not abide, and whereat they muttered privately among themselves. . . .

"Whereas your honor persuaded me that I should find them such loving and courteous people, I have found them clean contrary; even the mayor himself, of whom you made so great account, hath dealt but strangely with me. . . . As for the sheriffs, they were the greatest enemies I had, and went about to disgrace me most. . . . They called a son of Peter Strange's, where I stop, turncoat, traitor, and Protestant, because he used to go to the English service. These speeches and far worse are in their children, but if your honor did but dwell amongst their parents, to see their villainy in massing at home and murdering at God's word in the church, I know you could not abide it. . . . For these aforesaid causes I thought good to give over the place and betake myself to my country, where I hope to live with a quiet conscience; for here I could have no comfort, because there is not one professor of the Gospel to be found among them, no not one. . . .

"The 13th of July, 1585.

"Your honor's to command,

"JOHN SHEARMAN."

—Record Office, London, Ireland, Elizabeth, pag. 118. vol. i.

idolatry, it may be asked, were the reforming ministers angels of light or of darkness? whilst the evangelical truths were on their lips, did corruption fester in their hearts, or did the fruits which they produced, reveal to the world the heavenly character of the mission to which they pretended? The chief Protestant contemporary writers, who were best acquainted with the true condition of the reformed church, will supply sufficient data to enable the reader to reply to these important questions.

As early as the 22nd of July, 1562, the lord deputy, the earl of Sussex, wrote to sir William Cecil: "Our religion is so abused, as the Papists rejoice; the neuters do not mislike changes, and the few zealous professors lament the lack of piety. . . The ministers, for disability and greediness, be had in contempt, and the wise fear more the impiety of the licentious professors than the superstition of the erroneous Papists. These matters be so far come that they be not, I think, to be helped by private commissions, but rather by parliament, wherein limits in religion and discipline may be appointed, with such severe orders for punishment of the breakers thereof, as men may fear to go beyond or come short. God hold his hand over us, that our licentious disorders and lack of religious hearts do not bring, in the mean time, His wrath and revenge upon us."*

In 1565, the earl of Sussex was succeeded in the chief government of Ireland by sir Henry Sidney, who, on his arrival, found the kingdom "overwhelmed by the most deplorable immorality and irreligion."† He summoned the privy council, and invited them to deliberate on the condition of the country. The following was the appalling result of their investigations:

"The pale was overrun with thieves and robbers; the countryman so poor, that he hath neither horse, arms, nor victuals for himself; and the soldiers so beggarly, that they could not live without oppressing the subject: for want of discipline they were grown insolent, loose, and idle. . . . As for religion, there was but small appearance of it: the churches uncovered and the clergy scattered; and scarce the being of a God known to those ignorant and barbarous people."‡

To prepare some remedy for such abuses, the lord deputy

* Shirley, "Orig. Lett." p. 117-18. † Mant, vol. i. p. 287. ‡ Cox, i. p. 319.

made a *progress* into Munster and Connaught, in 1568, and the preamble of the act of parliament 11th Elizabeth, sess. 3, chap. vi., records the results of his inquiries:—

“Whereas, the right hon. sir Henry Sidney, etc., hath in his late progress into Munster and Connaught found, among other experience, the great abuse of the clergy there, in admitting of unworthy personages to ecclesiastical dignities which hath neither lawfulness of birth, learning, English habit nor English language, etc., getting into the said dignities either by force, simony, friendship, or other corrupt means, to the great overthrow of God’s holy church, and the evil example of all honest congregations:” then follows the act authorizing the lord deputy to appoint for ten years, to all the ecclesiastical benefices of these provinces,—the four cathedral churches of Waterford, Limerick, Cork, and Cashel, alone being excepted.*

This remedy does not seem to have produced the desired result; and in April, 1576, we find the same sir Henry Sidney, once more lord deputy, addressing another remonstrance to her majesty, on the deplorable state of her Irish Church:—

“MAY IT PLEASE YOUR MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY,—I have, in four several discourses, addressed unto the lords of your highness’s most honorable council, certified them how I found this realm at my arrival in the same, and what I have seen and understood by my travel these six last months, in which I have passed through each province, and have been in almost each county thereof. . . . And now, most honored sovereign, I solely address to you, as to the only sovereign salve-giver to this your sore and sick realm, the lamentable state of the most noble and principal limb thereof, the church I mean—as foul, deformed, and as cruelly crushed as any other part thereof, only by your gracious and religious order to be cured, or at least amended. I would not have believed had I not, for a great part, viewed the same throughout the whole realm.”

After this general statement he descends to particulars, and first to the diocese of Meath:—

“There are within this diocese two hundred and twenty-four parish-churches, of which number one hundred and five are impropriated to sundry possessions; no parson or vicar resident upon any of them, and a very simple or sorry curate for the most part appointed to serve them; among which number of curates, only eighteen were found able to speak English, the rest being Irish ministers, or rather Irish rogues,

* Lib. Mun. Hiberniæ, vol. ii. part 6, page 11.

having very little Latin, and less learning and civility. . . . In many places the very walls of the churches are thrown down; very few chancels covered; windows or doors ruined or spoiled. There are fifty-two other parish churches in the same diocese which have vicars endowed upon them, better served and maintained than the others, yet badly. There are fifty-two parish churches more, residue of the first number of two hundred and twenty-four, which pertain to divers particular lords; and these, though in better state than the others commonly, are yet far from well.

"If this be the state of the church in the best-peopled diocese, and best-governed country of this your realm, as in truth it is, easy is it for your majesty to conjecture in what case the rest is, where little or no reformation either of religion or manners hath yet been planted and continued among them; yea, so profane and heathenish are some parts of this your country become, as it hath been preached publicly before me, that the sacrament of baptism is not used amongst them; and truly I believe it. If I should write unto your majesty what spoil hath been, and is of the archbishoprics, of which there are four, and of the bishoprics, whereof there are above thirty, partly by the prelates themselves, partly by the potentates, their noisome neighbours, I should make too long a libel of this my letter. But your majesty may believe it, that upon the face of the earth where Christ is professed, there is not a church in so miserable a case."

The remedies which the lord deputy suggests are, first, the repair of the churches; second, the sending of instructed ministers, who should, moreover, be versed in the Irish language; and thirdly, an increased provision for the Protestant clergy. He dwells especially on the second head, and prays her majesty that if duly-instructed ministers cannot be had in England, they be sought for in Scotland; he concludes with an additional request:—

"I wish, and most humbly beseech your majesty, that there may be three or four grave, learned, and venerable personages of the clergy there, be sent hither,* who, in short space, being here, would sensibly perceive the enormities of this overthrown church, and easily prescribe orders for the repair and upholding of the same, which, I hope, God would confirm. And I find no difficulty but that your officer here might execute the same. Cause the bishops of that your realm to undertake this apostleship, and that upon their own charges. They are rich

* We learn from the Protestant chancellor of Leighlin at this period, that the visitation of our Irish Church by English dignitaries were not always productive of much good: "Anno 1577. Georgius Ackworth, legum doctor, et Robertus Garvey, legum baccalaureus, destinati ad clerum Hibernicum titulo magistrorum ad facultates pro reformatione cleri: sed Ecclesiæ potius perturbatio sequebatur."—Dowling's Annals, pag. 43, published by I. A. S.

enough; and if either they be thankful to your majesty for your immense bounty done to them, or zealous to increase the Christian flock, they will not refuse this honorable and religious travail; and I will undertake their guiding and guarding, honorably and safely, from place to place.”*

An able English Protestant statesman (lord Grenville), after citing some extracts from this letter of sir Henry Sidney, remarks: “Such was the condition of a church which was half a century before rich and flourishing, an object of reverence and a source of consolation to the people. It was now despoiled of its revenues; the sacred edifices were in ruins; the clergy were either ignorant of the language of their flocks, or illiterate and uncivilized intruders; and the only ritual permitted by the laws, was one of which the people neither comprehended the language nor believed the doctrines: and this was called establishing a reformation.”

Twenty years rolled on from the date of Sidney's letter: the first generation of reformed preachers, we may suppose, had passed away; yet their successors in the ministry presented precisely the same features to their friendly poet, Spencer; and the only fruits which marked their ministry, were the spread amongst their followers of immorality and irreligion. A little before his death, in 1598, Edmund Spencer composed his “View of the State of Ireland,” in which he minutely sketches the character of the Protestant clergy and their flocks: “The clergy there,” he says, “excepting the grave fathers which are in high place about the state and some few others, are generally bad, licentious, and most disordered.” And he adds: “Whatever disorders you see in the Church of England, you may find in Ireland, and many more—namely, gross simony, greedy covetousness, incontinence, careless sloth, and generally all disordered life in the common clergyman. And, besides all these, they have their particular enormities; for all Irish ministers that now enjoy church livings are in a manner mere laymen, saving that they have taken holy orders; but otherwise they go and live like laymen; follow all kinds of husbandry and other wordly affairs,

* Sir H. Sydney's Letters and Memorials, vol. i. pag. 112. Dublin Castle, 28th of April, 1576.

† “Past and Present Policy of England towards Ireland”: London, 1845, pag. 27.

as other Irishmen do. They neither read the Scriptures, nor preach to the people, nor administer the communion. . . only they take the tithes and offerings, and gather what fruit else they may of their livings.”*

In a strain of animated eloquence Spencer subsequently contrasts the zeal of the Catholic clergy with the conduct of the reforming ministers:—

“It is a great wonder to see the odds between the zeal of Popish priests and the ministers of the Gospel; for *they* spare not to come out of Spain, from Rome, and from Rheims, by long toil and dangerous travelling hither, where they know peril of death awaiteth them, and no rewards or riches are to be found, only to draw the people to the Church of Rome: whereas some of our idle ministers, having a way for credit and esteem thereby opened unto them without pains and without peril, will neither for the same, nor any love of God, nor zeal of religion, nor for all the good they may do by winning souls to God, be drawn forth from their warm nests to look out into God’s harvest.”†

The material buildings do not seem to have been much better than the officiating clergy. “The most part of the churches,” the same writer continues, “lie even with the ground.‡ And some that have been lately repaired, are so unhandsomely patched and thatched, that men do even shun the places for the uncomeliness thereof.”

The above censures may be supposed, indeed, to principally regard the lower order of the Protestant clergy. Carte, another unbiassed witness, fully corroborates their evil fame: “The clergy of the established church,” he writes, “were generally ignorant and unlearned, loose and irregular in their lives and conversations, negligent of their cures, and very careless of observing uniformity and decency in divine worship.”

Even the bishops, however, seem to have been far from models of perfection; and the contemporary writers, of one accord, describe them to us as mainly intent on plundering

* View, etc. pag. 139, 140.

† Ibid. pag. 254-5.

‡ The following preamble to a proclamation issued by sir John Perrott, 4th March, 1584, furnishes another proof of the wretched state of the cathedral and parish churches: “Whereas, it appeareth unto us that churches and chancels for the most part within this realm, are not only decayed, ruined, and broken down, but also, we find that free-schools, which are to be maintained and kept for the education and bringing up of youth in good literature, are now, for the most part, not kept or maintained,” etc.—Hardiman’s *Bardic Rem.* ii. 409.

their respective sees, and enriching their own families. Between 1560 and 1564, Dr. Craik of Kildare succeeded in disposing of most of the manors and lands belonging to his bishopric, thus, says Ware, "reducing that very ancient see to a most shameful poverty." Harris adds, that in the three years of his episcopate, "he did more mischief to his see than his successors have been ever able to repair."* Dr. Allen of Ferns, about the same time, is described as committing many wastes on the lands of his see; and Cavenagh of Leighlin left his diocese in *so naked a condition*, as to be scarce worth any one's acceptance.†

In 1574, sir John Perrott presented to her majesty a remonstrance as to the evils prevalent in Munster, and their necessary remedy. He suggests: "First of all, that her majesty should write sharp letters to the archbishops and bishops of that province, to deal more carefully in their several charges than hitherto they have done, in setting forth of God's word in their several dioceses." Of the Protestant archbishop of that province, Dr. Miler Magrath, we have already had occasion to speak. Towards the close of his episcopate, he received as coadjutor, Dr. William Knight, who, however, in a short time, "having excited the scorn and derision of the people" by his public drunkenness, was obliged to fly to England.‡ One of his suffragans, the Protestant bishop of Cloyne and Ross, was deprived for public immorality.§ Dr. Middleton of Waterford, another suffragan, was, at the same time, translated to St. David's, and there degraded *for the forgery of a will*, as Harris writes, but as Heylin informs us, "for many notable misdemeanours."|| Well, indeed, did sir John Perrott call on her majesty to write an exhortation to her southern bishops! Dr. Adam Loftus, archbishop of Armagh, in his report to the lords of the privy council, June 10th, 1566, says: "Bishops have been sent to occupy almost all the best posts in the land, of whose unableness and untowardness, if it might do good, I would say more."¶ On

* Harris's Ware, pag. 391. † Ibid. 446 and 462. ‡ Harris's Ware, pag. 484.

§ See official record in Gilbert's Hist. of Dublin, vol. i., pag. 114: "propter adulterium manifestum et confessum.

|| See Harris loc. cit. pag. 538. A few years later, another Protestant bishop of this see was publicly executed in Dublin, for crimes which the apostle forbids to be even heard on the lips of Christians.—See Harris, *ibid.*, pag. 539-541: also Cambrensis Eversus, vol. ii. pag. 149.

¶ Shirley, Orig. Lett. pag. 256.

the same day he wrote on this subject to sir William Cecil, declaring that "the people were much fleeced, and nothing at all fed" by their spiritual pastors.* One instance, however, will suffice to show what little influence was exercised by these remonstrances, as regarded the nomination of reformed bishops for our Irish sees. In 1566, the bishopric of Ferns was solicited by several candidates. Dr. John Devereux had many recommendations from persons of high station in court. On the 3rd of September, 1566, Dr. Adam Loftus wrote to sir William Cecil: "The bishopric of Ferns is presently void, and I fear laboured for by one Devereux. An unfitter man cannot be: he has been of late deprived of his deanery for confessed immorality."† Nevertheless, a few days after the receipt of that letter by her majesty's secretary, the patent was issued appointing Dr. Devereux to that see.

Such were the men sent to reform the Church of the Leverouses, the MacConghails, and the Creaghs. Spencer, so often already referred to, further illustrates the mission of the English prelates—

"They have their clergy," he says, "in such awe and subjection under them, that they dare not complain of them, so as they may do to them as they please; for they, knowing their own unworthiness and incapacity, and that they are therefore still removeable at their bishop's will, yield what pleaseth him, and he taketh what he liketh; yea, and some of them whose dioceses are in remote parts, somewhat out of the world's eye, do not at all bestow the benefices which are in their own donation upon any, but keep them in their own hands, and set their own servants and horse-boys to take up the tithes and fruits of them, with which some of them purchase great lands, and build fair castles upon the same, of which abuse, if any question be moved, they have a very seemly colour and excuse, that they have no worthy ministers to bestow them upon."‡

And lest the reader might not understand what he meant by this scarcity of worthy ministers, he adds—

"There are no sufficient English ministers sent over as might be presented to *any bishop for any living*; but the most part of such English as come over hither of themselves, are either unlearned or men of some bad note, for which they have forsaken England."§

* Orig. Lett. p. 258. He elsewhere lamentably deplores "the miserable state and condition of this poor church of Ireland."—Ibid. pag. 322: letter of Loftus to Cecil, 5th Dec. 1567.

† Shirley, ib. p. 271.

‡ View, etc., p. 104.

§ Ibid. p. 141. Even in England the standard of the reforming ministers

A characteristic feature of the Protestant clergy of this period, was the frenzy with which they hounded on their religious brethren to deeds of cruel and barbarous ferocity. We have already recorded this of Dr. Adam Loftus,* after his translation to the see of Dublin. Matthew Sheyn of Cork, and his successor, Dr. Lyons, might also be mentioned as examples. But to vary our details, we shall rather cite the fact which is recorded of Hewson, Protestant minister of Swords, who fell violently on a Catholic named Horris, a native of that town, and having seized upon his crucifix, dragged it to the market-place, where he hung it upon a gallows with words of blasphemy written beneath. The Catholic preferred a complaint against the minister to the secretary, sir Geoffry Fenton, and presented the mutilated and defaced crucifix; but sir Geoffrey only added insult to his former injuries, and snatching the crucifix, trampled it under foot, and moreover ordered Horris to be committed to prison for having dared to utter such a complaint.†

was not very high. Strype, speaking of 1565, says, "the ignorance of the ordinary sort of clergymen, curates, and such like, is commonly said to be great about these times" (Life of Parker, vol. i. p. 258). Dr. Talbot, archbishop of Dublin, in his *Politician's Catechism*, also writes: "As for their inferior clergy, I will give you a brief catalogue, made by that famous Dr. Stapleton, who lived in those times. 'And wherein I pray you, saith he, resteth a great part of your new clergy, but in butchers, cooks, catchpoles, and cobblers; dyers, and dawbers, fellows carrying their mark in the hand, fishermen . . . potters, pothecaries, and porters of Billingsgate, pinners, pedlars, ruffling ruffians, saddlers, sheremen and shepherds, tanners, tilers, tinkers,' etc. This rabble-rout of mean and infamous persons did cast so foul an aspersion upon our Protestant clergy, that even to this day the most ordinary citizens think their family disgraced, when any of their nearest kindred become ministers."—Chap. 5.

* Dr. Loftus, for forty years, was the leading agent of the English crown in Ireland. Harris writes of him that his character was "somewhat tarnished by his excessive ambition and avarice; for besides his promotions in the church and his public employments in the state, he grasped at everything that became void, either for himself or family" (loc. cit. p. 353). In May, 1572, her majesty granted him a dispensation to hold with his archbishopric, any livings not exceeding £100 per annum in value—a dispensation of which he so fully availed himself, that the dean and chapter of Christ's Church, on making some concession to him on the 28th August, 1578, obliged him to insert a clause, promising not to become suitor to them for any further benefices.—See Monck Mason's Hist. of St. Patrick's, and Harris loc. cit.

† "Theatre of Protestant and Catholic Religion," p. 117. The same work gives us another instance of the impious cruelty of sir G. Fenton: "he did set a poor fellow on the pillory in Dublin, with the picture of Christ about his neck, for having carried the same before a dead friend at a funeral."—P. 118.

Appendix to the preceding Introduction,

SHOWING HOW THE EPISCOPAL SUCCESSION OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH OF IRELAND WAS PRESERVED DURING ELIZABETH'S REIGN.

1. Statement of Dr. Todd and other Protestant writers, that in the sixteenth century the Irish Church merged into the Reformation.—2. Dr. Mant attempts to prove statistically that the Irish Hierarchy adopted the Tenets of the Reformation.—3. Dr. Mant, in his enumeration of the Irish sees, omits three.—4. Armagh not vacant, as supposed by Dr. Mant.—5. Seven sees, supposed by Dr. Mant to be vacant, not so.—6. Two Catholics deprived, but unjustly; one apostate removed.—7. Eleven sees vacated by death, two by resignation; how they retained the Catholic succession.—8. Two sees vacated by resignation.—9. Dr. Mant's opinions, regarding four other sees, examined.—10. Conclusion.

- 1.—*Statement of Dr. Todd and other Protestants, that in the sixteenth century, the Irish Church merged into the Reformation.*

MANY modern Protestant writers have endeavoured to persuade their readers, that on the revolt of Elizabeth from spiritual allegiance to the See of Rome, the Irish bishops and clergy, with scarce a dissentient voice, approved of her majesty's resolve, and gladly severed the sacred bonds that united them with the Vicar of Christ.

Dr. James Henthorn Todd is the latest exponent of this singular theory. In the preface to his life of "St. Patrick, Apostle of Ireland"* he thus writes: "It was necessary in order to correct some popular mistakes, to draw attention to the fact, that from the eleventh century to the reformation, there were two churches in Ireland, each ignoring as far as it could the existence of the other; and that since the reformation, a third church has sprung up, deriving its succession from a foreign source; whilst the original Irish Church, properly so called, having merged into the church of the English pale, has adopted the reformation, and lost in a great measure its hold upon the descendants of the native tribes."† Thus, then, the *mere Irish Church*, which was long in opposition

* Dublin, 1864.

† Preface iii-iv.

to the church of the English pale, combined with it in embracing the reformed creed.

This theory, indeed, can scarcely be reconciled with what the same learned writer attests in his subsequent narrative: "It is highly probable," he writes (pag. 242), "that had the reformation been presented to the Irish people in a Gaelic dress and in the Gaelic language, it would have been accepted without difficulty; but, unfortunately, the reverse was the case. The reformation was almost studiously brought into Ireland in ostentatious connection with the church of the pale and the English colonists; it was planted on the basis of puritanism and iconoclastic outrage; and to this day the influence of that unhappy mistake continues to destroy the usefulness, and to paralyze the energies of the Irish (Protestant) clergy. The reformed doctrines were regarded by the oppressed and degraded natives of Ireland as essentially English; and, accordingly, they were rejected without examination, and spurned with the detestation and abhorrence with which the English, and everything coming from England, were, as a matter of course, received." Lest, however, some inexperienced reader might suppose that there was a contradiction in these statements, Dr. Todd remarks in the same page: "When the Anglo-Irish Church accepted the reformation, the 'mere Irish' clergy were found to have become practically extinct."*

The sketch of the persecutions suffered by the Catholics of Ireland for their faith, which we have just now presented to the reader, should suffice to prove how erroneous are the statements thus advanced by this learned writer. It is not true that the Anglo-Irish as a body, or as a church, accepted the Elizabethan reformation; and much less can that statement be made in regard to the *mere Irish*. The mild beneficent government of Elizabeth and her ministers, both clerical and lay, left no means, indeed, untried to merge the *mere Irish* Church into the newly-introduced establishment: finding, however, that this was impossible, they had recourse to the sword and scaffold, that thus, at least, they might render the *mere Irish clergy* practically extinct. Like the early persecutors of the Christian name, we find the agents of Elizabeth more than once exulting, whilst conveying to

* Ibid. p. 242.

their ruler the announcement that a Popish bishop had been subjected to torture or put to death; and at other times they officially proclaimed to the world, that the mere Irish priesthood was no more. But the blood of Irish martyrs only served to fertilize our church; its faithful clergy never failed; in poverty and wretchedness and suffering, they went to the mountains and bogs with their *mere Irish* flock. When a bishop was summoned from their ranks by fatigue or martyrdom, another was ready to assume his perilous post; and if, through the rage of the persecutors, he could not receive the sacred imposition of hands at home, he journeyed to Spain, or France, or Rome, and thence returned with renewed energy to pursue his missionary career. We shall just now present in detail the names of those *mere Irish* bishops who, at this trying period, fearlessly trimmed the lamp of faith in our island; it will not be amiss, however first, to briefly state some of the other theories which are put forward by our adversaries, when labouring to explain how the Irish Church became Protestant.

The late Protestant dean of Ardagh, in his "Ireland and Her Church,"* recklessly asserts, that "the bishops, with the exception of two, and *all* the priests," embraced the reformation.† Elsewhere he repeats: "As soon as the determination of the queen was known in Ireland, the *whole* body of the Romish priests abandoned their connection with Rome."‡

Shirley, in his valuable "Original Letters and Papers," etc.,§ with more reserve affirms, that "although from the distracted state of the times, the reformation was necessarily very imperfectly carried out in Ireland, the true succession of bishops in the (Protestant) Church was ever preserved, and that *solely in the line of prelates acknowledged by the state.*"||

The Hon. and Rev. A. Perceval, in "An Apology for the Doctrine of Apostolical Succession," also states, that "at the accession of queen Elizabeth, of all the Irish bishops, only two were deprived, and two others resigned on account of their adherence to the supremacy of the See of Rome. The rest continued in their sees; and from them the bishops and clergy of the Irish Church derive their orders. . . . This has never been disputed."

* London, 1845. † P. 207. ‡ P. 205. § London, 1851. || Preface, viii

The anonymous author of "Historical Notices of peculiar Tenets of the Church of Rome" still more explicitly affirms, that "by the records of the Irish Church it appears, that when in the reign of queen Elizabeth the Roman jurisdiction was renounced, of all the Irish bishops only two, namely, Walsh bishop of Clonard (it should be *Meath*), and Leverous bishop of Kildare, suffered deprivation for their refusal to join in that renunciation. Two others, Lacey bishop of Limerick, and Skiddy bishop of Cork and Cloyne, resigned—the former in 1566, and the latter in 1571, possibly from scruples on the same score."

2.—*Dr. Mant attempts to prove statistically that the Irish Hierarchy adopted the Tenets of the Reformation.*

Dr. Mant, Protestant bishop of Down and Connor, has, however, far outstripped all these writers in the clear statement which he has made of this Protestant theory. Only two bishops, he says, remained devoted to the cause of Rome. Many years after Elizabeth's accession to the throne, two others resigned their charge, but this resignation had nothing to do with the supremacy of the Pope, and was just as if Protestant bishops were now to resign their sees. Thus, of all the bishops except two, he says, it may be confidently asserted, that they conformed to the Protestant tenets.* Subsequently† he thus specifies his assertion regarding each Irish diocese:—

"Of the twenty-eight bishoprics at the queen's accession, there was vacant *one* (Armagh); those of which the occupants are not known were *seven* (viz.: Kilmore, Dromore, Raphoe, Derry, Kilfenoragh, Killala, and Achonry). Subsequently, there were vacated by deprivation two (Kildare and Meath); by translation, one (Dublin); by death, *eleven* (viz.: Clonmacnoise, Ardagh, Ossory, Ferns, Leighlin, Cashel, Emly, Waterford, Tuam, Elphin, and Clonfert); by resignation, *two* (viz.: Limerick and Cork and Cloyne); by causes not recorded, *four* (viz.: Clogher, Down and Connor, Ardferf and Killaloe)."[‡]

Here, at least, the question is clearly stated, and the whole controversy is reduced to certain heads, on each of which

* Hist. of Irish Church, London, 1840, chap. v. † Ap. No. 2. ‡ Ib. p. 743-4.

we shall make a few remarks; and as Dr. Mant and the other Protestant writers just mentioned restrict themselves to mere historical statements, we shall keep ourselves within the same limits, and not descend to doctrinal or polemical discussions. The reader, however, must bear in mind, that even if Dr. Mant's or Dr. Todd's assertions were founded on fact, and that the legitimate occupants of the Irish sees became Protestants, or that Protestants were placed in those sees when they were duly vacated, it would not follow that the true hierarchical succession was maintained in the Protestant Church. Every one versed in ecclesiastical history must know that a bishop, such as Nestorius, by abandoning the true faith and becoming a heretic, may forfeit all right to his see; and that other prelates, such as Photius, though intruded by the secular power into the sanctuary, have no claim to rank among the successors of the apostles, and never acquire any spiritual jurisdiction. According to the doctrine received from the earliest ages by all Catholics, a bishop becoming a public heretic not only loses all jurisdiction, but ceases to be a member of the Church; and also a bishop enjoying no other jurisdiction but that which he derives from a temporal sovereign, such as queen Elizabeth, or the empress Elizabeth of Russia, has no authority to feed the flock of Christ, whose kingdom is not of this world. But omitting these questions* we return to Dr. Mant.

3.—*Dr. Mant, in his enumeration of Irish sees, omits three—Mayo, Ross, and Kilmacduagh.*

In the first place, it seems strange that this prelate should completely pass over in silence three sees, viz.: Mayo, Ross, and Kilmacduagh; each of which had, at that time, its own

* We have been forced to pass over controversial topics in order to avoid prolixity; but we may here add, that in order to establish the legitimate succession of the Protestant bishops, the following points should be proved:—1st. That queen Elizabeth had the right from God of nominating bishops and giving them spiritual jurisdiction; 2nd. That she had a right to deprive the Pope of the power of nominating and confirming bishops which the universal Church had recognized in him from the first dawn of Christianity; 3rd. That she had the right of depriving bishops canonically appointed, though guilty of no offence, of their spiritual powers, and appointing in their stead men publicly professing heresy; 4th. That the men promoted to the Protestant episcopacy had received the previous orders, and were capable of receiving episcopal consecration; 5th. That the ceremonial of consecration was valid, etc.

bishop, and formed a distinct see. It cannot be that the learned prelate was ignorant of their existence; for in the preceding pages of his history he more than once refers to these dioceses. This silence seems to be a concession that, at least, these three sees were then occupied by Catholic bishops whose claims to the episcopal succession could not be controverted.

Mayo.—Eugene MacBreohan, a Carmelite, was appointed its bishop on 21st of November, 1541. On his death, Dionysius O'Dwyer, O.S.F., was appointed on 12th of February, 1574. He died in the following year, and Patrick O'Hely, also a Franciscan, was proposed for the see in the consistory of 25th of June, 1576, and appointed on the 4th of July the same year. Another bishop, Adam Magcaran (perhaps MacGauran), was appointed to this see in the consistory of 29th July, 1585; and the Consistorial Acts add, after registering his appointment, the following note: "*hic habuit orationem contra reginam Angliæ et ejus tyranidem et impietatem in ecclesias et Catholicos tam in Anglia quam in Hibernia, protestans se hæc ipsa coram Sanctitate sua, ad suæ conscientiæ exonerationem dixisse.*"*

Ross.—The bishops of Ross were not less attached to the Catholic faith. The following are the entries of the Consistorial Acts: "*die 22, Januarii, 1554: providit Sanctitas S. Ecclesiæ Rossensi in Hibernia, vacanti per obitum Dermitii Macary (perhaps M'Carthy), de persona D. Mauritii O'Fihely, ord. F F. M.M., et Theologiæ Professoris.*"

"*Die 15, Martii, 1559, referente Revm. Dom. Card. Pacecho fuit provisum Ecclesiæ Rossensi in Hibernia per obitum bon. mem. Mauritii O'Phihil (O'Fihely), pastoris solatio destitutæ, de persona R. D. Mauritii Hoga (another copy writes the name Hæe), Presbyteri Hiberni.*"

On his death, Dr. Thomas O'Herlihy was appointed, as we have already seen, on 17th December, 1561; and happily terminated his glorious episcopate in 1579. Wadding, in his *Annals*,† when describing the monastery of Kilchree, adds the following tribute to the memory of this great bishop: "*Ibidem*

* *Ex Actis Consist.* In the extracts from the acts of the consistory, the family names of our Irish bishops are often badly spelled, or mutilated. We give them in their incorrect shape as we found them. The reader will easily correct them.

† *Ad an. 1465, num. xx.*

(i. e. in the convent of Kilchree) sepultusest anno, 1579, Thomas Hierlajus Epus. Rossensis post multas ærumnas pro fide Catholica constantissime toleratas et vitam sanctissime peractam, mortuus in Muscreana ditione."

Kilmacduagh.—Dr. Christopher Bodkin was consecrated bishop of Kilmacduagh about the year 1534. Though he soon after schismatically seized on the archiepiscopal see of Tuam, he was never recognized as archbishop by Rome. Considering the peculiar circumstances of the times, and the many material advantages he had conferred on Tuam, he was allowed by cardinal Pole to retain the temporal administration of the see, with the right of succession on the death of the canonically-elected archbishop, Dr. O'Frighi. However, the spiritual jurisdiction of Dr. Bodkin extended only to the diocese of Kilmacduagh. On his death, bishop Malachy of Killaloe petitioned to be translated to this see; this translation was sanctioned by the Holy Father in the consistory of 22nd August, 1576, and Dr. Malachy governed this diocese till after the accession of king James. A letter of this prelate to the king of Spain, written in 1602, is given in *Hibernia Pacata*, page 689.

4.—*Armagh not vacant, as supposed by Dr. Mant.*

We now come to the see of Armagh, described as vacant by Dr. Mant, and in which her majesty wished to perpetuate the hierarchical succession, by the appointment of Dr. Adam Loftus. It is true that Dr. Dowdall died on the 15th of August, 1558, before the accession of Elizabeth; but it is not true that the see was vacant when her majesty, on 30th of October, 1561, wrote to the archbishop of Dublin, "commanding the consecration of Dr. Loftus."* The Catholic archbishop, Dr. Donatus Fleming, was then actively engaged in attending to his spiritual flock, having been appointed to the vacant see of Armagh, on the 7th February, 1560.† Indeed, there seems to have been some fatality about the Protestant appointments to Armagh. The appointment of Dr. Dowdall had been schismatical; but he repented, and even before the death of Edward VI., was restored

* Shirley, Orig. Lett. pag. 98.

† Ex Act. Consist.

by Rome to the primatial dignity. The lord deputy wrote to the king in 1551, to declare that the archbishop of Armagh had "absented himself from his see, whereby the said bishopric is void;"* and though Dr. Dowdall was still living, and had never been deposed,† another archbishop, Dr. Hugh Goodacre, was consecrated according to Edward's ritual, on 2nd February, 1553. The case of Dr. Loftus' appointment was somewhat similar. Not only was the Catholic bishop in actual possession of the see, but even her majesty found it necessary to do away with the legal requirements for the election of his opponent. Her majesty, indeed, wrote to the dean and chapter of Armagh, recommending the election of Dr. Loftus;‡ but owing to "Shane O'Neil's horsemen," and other reasons, no election was made;§ and so the archbishop was subsequently appointed without any such election, and consecrated for the primatial see.

Even on the death of Dr. Fleming, the succession of Catholic bishops was not interrupted; and the names of Richard Creagh, Edmund Magauran, and Peter Lombard, are still embalmed in the memory of the Irish people.

5.—*Seven sees supposed by Dr. Mant to be vacant, which were not so.*

The next class consists of those sees whose occupants *are not known*. The fact of the bishops of these *seven* sees not being known to Dr. Mant, or to the government of the day is, of itself, sufficient proof that they did not sever the spiritual bonds which bound them to Rome, nor bow to the *divine* supremacy of Elizabeth.

In the see of *Kilmore*, Dr. John Mac Brady had been bishop for many years during Henry's, and Edward's, and Mary's reign. On his death, a successor was appointed, as usual, in the consistory of 7th February, 1560, in the acts of which consistory we read: "Referente Rmo. Dno. Joanne Hieronymo Cardinali Morono sua Sanctitas providit Ecclesiæ Kilmorensi, in regno Hiberniæ, vacanti per obitum Joannis Mac Brady, de persona D. Odonis Ogenridan, Canonici Ecclesiæ Rapotensis, cum reten-

* See Shirley, loc. cit. pag. 50, seqq.

† Shirley, loc. cit. pag. 98.

‡ Harris' Ware's Bishops, pag. 91.

§ Ibid. p. 120.

tionem dicti canonicatus." On his death we find Dr. Richard Mac Brady translated to this see from Ardagh, in the consistory of 9th March, 1580; and though arrested in 1601, this holy bishop survived queen Elizabeth, and died in 1607. Now, as Dr. Mant and Ware acknowledge, the first Protestant bishop was intruded into this see in 1585.

Dromore was united at this time with the see of Ardagh: and in 1576 and 1585 we find bishops appointed to these united sees.* The first notice taken of it by the Protestant Church, seems to have been in 1606, when, according to Ware, it was united with the sees of Down and Connor.

As regards *Raphoe*, its bishop, on the accession of Elizabeth, was Dr. Arthur O'Gallagher; and on his death the celebrated Dr. M'Conghail was appointed bishop on 28th January, 1562. Before the close of 1589, he, too, passed to his eternal reward; and in the consistory of 5th August, 1591, Niall O'Boyle was appointed his successor.† This bishop was more than once arrested and thrown into prison: he, however, outlived Elizabeth, and died in 1611. George Montgomery was the first Protestant bishop of this see, having been appointed by king James in 1605.

Derry had for its first Protestant bishop the last-named prelate of Raphoe; for these two sees were united by royal authority, and committed to the charge of this puritanical Scotchman, as Dr. Mant informs us, in the year 1605. It had, however, during all this time, its succession of Catholic bishops. Dr. Eugene Magennis, who was appointed bishop in 1551, died in 1568, as we learn from a letter of Dr. Creagh: and his successor was appointed in the following year, being translated from the see of Killala. Dr. Raymund O'Gallagher, who thus was appointed to Derry, continued to govern his diocese till the close of Elizabeth's reign, when he died a glorious martyr—"gloriosus martyr occubuit,"—as our annalists attest.

Kilfenoragh, too, maintained its succession of pastors. From the consistorial acts we learn, that on the death of bishop Maurice, the abbot John Bujala (Boyle) was appointed bishop,

* The Burgundian List, as printed in Dr. Renehan's Collections, etc., p. 273, describes the see of Dromore as united with Armagh: this must be a mistake of the copyist for Ardagh.

† Ex Act. Consist.

on 21st November, 1541. Hugh MacLanchan, a Franciscan, was his successor during the reign of Elizabeth.*

Killala had no Protestant bishop till 1591. It is no wonder, indeed, that Dr. Mant should describe the bishops of these sees as unknown. They at least knew nothing of Protestantism, but they remained true to their religion and to their spiritual charge. In the consistory of 6th November, 1545, the see being vacant by the death of Dr. Barret, the young priest of Raphoe, Dr. Raymund O'Gallagher was appointed its administrator: he was consecrated its bishop in 1549. On his being translated to Derry, Dr. Donatus O'Gallagher was appointed his successor in the see of Killala, on 4th of September, 1570. This bishop, too, was translated to Down and Connor in 1580, and had for his successor a Franciscan, John Hubert, appointed bishop of Killala, in the consistory of 19th July, 1580.

Achonry.—Last, though certainly not least, under the score of unknown bishops, is given the bishop of Achonry. The letter of David Wolf, which we have already published,† supplies us with sufficient information about this see. Dr. Cormac O'Quinn was its bishop on the accession of Elizabeth. Eugene O'Hart, his nephew, and a distinguished member of the order of St. Dominick, was appointed his successor in the consistory of 28th January, 1562. He, too, outlived his persecutors, and died in 1603. If this bishop was unknown to Dr. Mant, he was not, however, unknown to the Protestant primate in 1585. The following letter of Dr. John Long, Protestant archbishop of Armagh, addressed to Walsingham, and dated June 4th, 1585, is preserved in the Record Office, London, and betrays the delusion of the zealous primate, that this holy bishop was about being entrapped in the meshes of the Established Church:—

“Owen O'Hart, bishop of Achonry, being committed unto me by the lord deputy to be conferred with, is brought, by the Lord's good direction, to acknowledge his blindness, to prostrate himself before her majesty, whom he afore agreed to accurse in religion: so persuaded, I doubt not but great good will ensue by his means. He has resigned his bishopric, and no doubt void of all temporizing, is thoroughly persuaded that the man of sin sitteth in Rome, under pretence of the seat of God. I assure your honour, if we used not this people

* See Burgundian List, p. 275.

† Page 85.

more for gain than for consciencè, here would the Lord's work be mightily prospered."*

The poor primate, however, notwithstanding all his pious delusion, soon found he had mistaken the bishop of Achonry. Hence, Eugene O'Connor was appointed to the united Protestant see of Killala and Achonry, in 1591. Dr. O'Hart, having been his old schoolfellow, visited him, and easily persuaded him to accept 150 marks annually, and to leave to himself all the spiritual work and the charge of the *mere Irish* of Achonry.†

6.—*The two Catholic bishops of Kildare and Meath deprived, but unjustly. One Apostate, Dr. Curwin, translated to England.*

As regards the next class, we have no fault to find with Dr. Mant's statement. Two bishops, and two only, had official sentence of deprivation passed against them, whilst two Protestant bishops were, without delay, appointed to their sees. But surely the time is now come when even Protestants should deny that the spiritual authority of those legitimately appointed bishops is dependant on the will of the sovereign, who wields the sceptre of temporal rule. St. Peter, when in the Mamer-tine, did not cease to be Vicar of Christ; and the glorious bishops of *Kildare* and *Meath*, though sentenced to imprisonment or exile, did not lose one particle of their episcopal authority. We have already seen how the illustrious martyr-bishop, Dr. Walsh, displayed the fulness of Christian heroism during his long imprisonment; and though the Protestant bishop was appointed in 1563, yet was Dr. Walsh, till his death in 1578, regarded as the bishop of Meath, not only by his own spiritual flock, but by the Holy See and by the bishops of the Catholic world, and whithersoever he went, he was welcomed as an angel of God, as we mentioned in ch. iv. p. 131.

Dr. Leverous, too, as we have also seen, continued to exercise his spiritual functions; he risked his life and shared the perils of his persecuted children, in order to break to them the food

* Irish Correspond. vol. 117, pag. 566.

† See the original passage of the MS. History of the Irish Church (preserved in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, and written by Dr. John Lynch, archdeacon of Killala), given above in note to chap. ii. § 3, pag. 64.

of life, and instruct them in the saving truths of the Catholic faith. The Protestant bishop, Alexander Craik, was intruded into this see whilst Dr. Leverous was still living in 1560.

Only one bishop, Dr. Curwin, betrayed the sacred charge entrusted to him, retaining at the same time the charge of the diocese to which he had been canonically appointed;* and such was his sad career, that his patrons were at length obliged to remove him to a more congenial soil, and allow him to enjoy the sweets of domestic repose in the see of Oxford. It is also remarkable, as we have already noticed in chapter the second, that this bishop was the only Englishman that held at this period the episcopal dignity in our Irish Church.

7.—Eleven Sees vacated by death. How they retained the Catholic succession.

In order to keep within due limits, our remarks on the bishops of the next class shall be but brief. They remained in undisturbed possession of their sees till their death, and at the same time continued unflinchingly attached to the Catholic faith

The bishop of *Clonmacnois*, Dr. Peter Wall, of the order of St. Dominick, was appointed in the consistory of 4th May, 1556, and continued undisturbed in the possession of his see till his demise in 1568. The Burgundian List adds the remark, that this diocese was, by the heretical government, annexed to Meath, but that the Holy See had not sanctioned this annexation.†

Ardayh.—The first Protestant bishop was Lisach Ferral, appointed in 1583. The Catholic bishop, Patrick M'Mahon, was

* Of course, when Dr. Curwin apostatized, he lost all authority to govern the flock of Christ. The see of Dublin, however, was not left without true ecclesiastical jurisdiction. Father David Wolf, F. Newman, F. White, a bishop named Donaldus, and occasionally the bishops of other dioceses, were deputed by the Holy See to provide for the spiritual wants of the people of Dublin. (See ante, p. 82.) Though Curwin betrayed his Divine Master, the clergy and people of Dublin were not seduced by his example. In the midst of privations and persecutions they continued to cling to the rock of Peter. The Protestant successors of Curwin were never the pastors of the people of Dublin. After a widowhood of about forty years, Dublin received again a bishop, and the same authority that first established the apostolical succession in Ireland, through the mission of St. Patrick, restored the connection with the mystic vine to the see of St. Laurence, and engrafted its prelates on the trunk of their holy Catholic predecessors.

† De Burgo, by an oversight, refers this bishop to the see of Cloyne.

appointed in consistory, 14th November, 1541.* On his death, Dr. Richard MacBrady, O.S.F., was appointed bishop, on 23rd January, 1576; and on his translation to Kilmore, Dr. Edmund MacGauran was consecrated its bishop, who retained its administration till his appointment to the primacy on 1st July, 1587.

Ossory had for its bishop Dr. John Thonory, who was consecrated at Inisteaigue, about the 1st of January, 1554. He died in 1567, and his successors are already well known from De Burgo.†

Ferns received for its bishop, in the consistory of 30th March, 1541, Bernard O'Donell, O.S.F. On the 3rd of June following, with the sanction of Rome, he exchanged sees with the bishop of Elphin, Dr. Hubert Iseranen (sic) of the Cistercian Order. This bishop, however, resigned the see of Ferns on the 5th May, 1542; on the same day Dermotius Fitzpatrick was appointed his successor, and seems to have held the see till his death, when Dr. Peter Power was appointed bishop in the consistory of 27th April, 1582: he died in 1587.

Leighlin.—Dr. Thomas O'Fihel, abbot of the monastery of Mageo, who had been appointed bishop of Achonry, in the consistory of 15th June, 1547, was transferred to Leighlin on 30th August, 1555, "cum retentione Ecclesiæ Parochialis Debellyns, Dublinensis Diocæsis."‡ He continued in undisturbed possession of his see till his death. The last Catholic bishop during Elizabeth's reign, was Francis Ribera, who, after an episcopate of eighteen years, died in Brussels in 1604.§ The brief of his appointment is dated 11th September, 1587.

Cashel and Emly.—The first Protestant occupant of these sees was James M'Caghwell, who was appointed to Cashel by letters patent of the 2nd October, 1567,|| and in the following year received the administration of Emly. Now the Catholic archbishop of Cashel, Dr. Maurice Fitzgibbon, was appointed in the consistory of 4th June, 1567; and the bishop of Emly, Dr. Maurice MacBryan was appointed on the 24th of January, 1567. Thus, both sees had their lawful bishops at the time of the intrusion of Dr. M'Caghwell.

* Ex Act. Consist. † Hib. Dom. pag. 505 (note). ‡ Ex Act. Consist.
§ Burgundian List and Consist. Acts. || Harris' Ware's Bishops, pag. 463.

Waterford.—On the death of Dr. Walsh, Rev. John White was appointed vicar-apostolic on the 4th of November, 1578. Nicholas Fagan, and James White were his successors.

Tuam.—We have already seen how Arthur O'Frighi was archbishop of Tuam on the accession of Elizabeth. His successor was Nicholas Skerret, appointed in consistory of 17th October, 1580. Dr. Miler O'Higgins was the next archbishop, being appointed in the consistory of 24th March, 1586. He died in Flanders, on his return from Rome, in the beginning of 1591; and on the 20th of March, the same year, he was succeeded by Dr. James O'Hely, to whom the pallium was granted on the 5th of April following.* During all this time the temporalities of the see were administered by Dr. William Lahy, who was intruded into Tuam in 1573.

Elphin.—According to Ware and Dr. Mant, this see was given in administration to Dr. De Burgo of Clonfert, in 1552, and thus continued till the death of that bishop, in 1580. Dr. De Burgo, however, renounced his schismatical administration of this see on the accession of queen Mary. Its succession of bishops was as follows: Dr. Bernard O'Donnell, O.S.F. held the see only for a few months. On the 5th May, 1542, I find the following entry in the Consistorial Acts: "SS. providit Ecclesiæ Elfinensi in Hibernia vacanti per obitum quondam Bernardi, de persona fr. Bernardi, presbyteri eremit. S. Augustini." This was probably Bernard O'Higgins, who, according to Ware, was appointed by the pope bishop of Elphin before 1552. From the letter of David Wolf, published in the preceding chapter, it appears, that Dr. O'Higgins continued in his see till the accession of Elizabeth. He resigned it in 1562, when Dr. O'Crean was appointed. On the 28th January, 1562, the Consistorial Acts record: "S.S. providit Ecclesiæ Elphinensi in Hibernia, vacanti per resignationem Rev. D. Honoyghum (sic) ord. S. Augustini Professoris, de persona Dni. Andreæ O'Crean, Hibernia ord. Præd. professoris, quem R. P. David presbyter, S.J. in Hibernia commorans per suas litteras commendavit." Dr. O'Crean assisted at the council of Trent. His successor seems to have been Dermetius O'Heily, who is described, in a *Relatio* of the archbishop of Dub-

* Ex Act. Consist.

lin, made in 1623, as being a bishop of Elphin, “qui obiit martyr tempore Elizabethæ.”* The last bishop of whom I find a trace in Elizabeth’s reign is *Raymund Galvirius*, as he is styled in the Consistorial Acts. No Protestant bishop was appointed till about 1582.

Clonfert.—Roland de Burgo was appointed by the Holy See in 1538, and not only exercised the spiritual authority, but took also possession of the temporalities, expelling the king’s nominee.† Though he schismatically obtained the see of Elphin in 1551, he was absolved by cardinal Pole on the accession of Mary. His death is thus registered in the Annals of the Four Masters: “Roland, the son of Redmond, the son of Ulick of Knocktua, bishop of Clonfert, died, and the loss of this good man was the cause of great lamentation in his own country.”‡ There can be no doubt of his having remained a Catholic till his death.

8—Two Sees vacated by resignation.

Dr. Mant reckons two sees vacated by resignation. This word *resignation*, however, means only that the revenues were appropriated by the crown. Thus we have seen above, that the bishop of Achonry was said by Dr. Long to have resigned his see; and Ware states that Dr. O’Herlihy of Ross *resigned* in 1571; we have, however, already seen how the case really stood.

Limerick.—The temporalities of this see were transferred by the crown to William Casey, in 1571. Dr. Lacy, however, did not cease to administer his spiritual charge. We find him petitioning the Holy See for special faculties for his diocese in 1575; and the same year we find the Holy See expediting these faculties for “Hugo epus. Limericensis;” and on account of the wants of the Irish Church, these faculties are further granted to him for the whole province of Cashel, “quamdiu ven. frater noster archiep. Cassellensis a sua diocesi et ecclesia et universa provincia abfuerit.”§ Indeed, so high was the esteem in which Dr. Lacy was held in Rome, that he was selected by the Holy See

* Ex Archiv. S. Cong. de Prop. Fid. Ad an. 1580.

† State Papers, vol. iii. pag. 50.

§ Ex Secret. Brevium. 3 Maii, 1575.

to recommend members of the Irish Church for the vacant sees. The see of Limerick, in 1580, is described in a Vatican list as vacant, "per obitum D. Ugonis Lacy in sua ecclesia defuncti."* Thus, by the so-called resignation of Dr. Lacy, the temporal possessions of the see were, indeed, *merged* in the Established Church, but the hierarchical succession remained unchanged, and both clergy and people continued attached to the faith of their fathers. Dr. Lacy's successor, Dr. Cornelius (Nachten), was appointed in 1581.

Cork and Cloyne.—On the resignation of Dr. Skiddy, in 1566, the first Protestant bishop was not appointed till 1570, as Ware and Dr. Mant inform us. Now the Catholic bishop was appointed on 27th February, 1568, being the celebrated Nicholas Landes. His successor was Dr. Edmund Tanner, appointed bishop on the nones of November, 1574. He was a native of the province of Leinster, and we find faculties granted to him by the Holy See, not only for his own diocese, but also for the provinces of Cashel and Dublin.† He was succeeded by Dermitius Graith, on 11th October, 1580, and this holy bishop, whose memory is still cherished in the south of Ireland, happily survived Elizabeth, and governed his diocese *aliquot annis sub Jacobo rege.*‡

9.—*Dr. Mant's opinions, regarding four other sees, examined.*

8. We have arrived at the last series of the Irish bishops, those, forsooth, who, for various causes not recorded in history, a few years after the accession of Elizabeth, are no longer registered amongst the bishops of their respective sees.

Clogher.—Dr. Mant seems to have been acquainted only with Dr. Odo O'Cervallan, who was appointed, he says, in 1542, and the time of whose death is not known. The first Protestant bishop was Miler Magrath, who was appointed in 1570. Now in the consistory of 29th May, 1560, we find the following note:—"S. S. providit ecclesiæ Clocherensi in Hibernia vacanti per obitum Mumothannæ (sic) in Romana

* Ex Archiv. Secret. Vatican.

† Ex Archiv. Secret. Brev. 10 April, 1575.

‡ Relatio Arch. Dublinen. in 1623.

curia defuncti de persona Dni. Cornelii Mercadell (perhaps MacCadel) cum retentione canonicatus," etc. We find, moreover, that Miler Magrath, then bishop of Down and Connor, petitioned the pope in 1568, to be translated to Clogher. Dr. Creagh wrote against having this petition granted; and then that unfortunate man addressed his solicitations to Elizabeth, who readily granted his translation in 1570. Other favours, too, were heaped on him; he was not only made archbishop of Cashel, but he was allowed to hold together with it the bishoprics of Emly, Waterford, and Lismore, and subsequently Killala and Achonry, as well as several rectories, etc., as may be seen in Harris' Bishops. He had, however, the good fortune to repent before his death, and to be received back into the Catholic fold by Dr. Kearney, archbishop of Cashel.

Down and Connor.—Dr. John Merriman was the first Protestant bishop of this see, as Dr. Mant informs us.* This bishop was appointed by Elizabeth in 1568. Already in 1565, on the fourth of the ides of October, Miler Magrath had been appointed Catholic bishop. Sentence of deposition was passed against him towards the close of 1569.† Thus the first Protestant bishop was certainly an intruder. As regards Dr. Magennis, who was appointed to this see by Rome in 1541, he seems to have died in 1564, as the Consistorial Acts describe the see, in 1565, as vacant, "per obitum Eugenii Magnissii."

Ardfert.—James Fitzmaurice held this see from 1551 till his death in 1583. We have already given some particulars about this bishop, and the Four Masters, registering his death, style him "a vessel full of wisdom." A successor seems to have been appointed without delay, as I find the see described as one to which a bishop might be appointed without danger. The only other entry that I met with in the Consistorial Acts of this period is as follows, on 5th August, 1591: "Fuit provisum Ecclesiæ Ardfertensi, in regno Hiberniæ, vacanti per obitum Jacobi Idorni (sic), de persona Michaelis Gualterii (perhaps FitzWalter), cum dispensatione super eo quod non sit doctor; et cum dispensatione etiam defectus oculi, quatenus opus sit, et cum retentione Decanatus Templi Christi in civitate Dublinensi quousque

* History, etc. vol. i. p. 296.

† Ex Archiv. Secret. Vatic.

adeptus fuerit possessionem pacificam ecclesiæ Ardferiensis aut majoris partis diocesis.”

Killaloe.—Terence O'Brien was bishop of this see till the year 1566, and Dr. Mant says he knows not what became of him afterwards. The first Protestant bishop was appointed in 1570 to enjoy the temporalities of the see, but was not consecrated till 1576.* The appointment of the Catholic bishop is registered on 10th January, 1571: “provisum fuit Ecclesiæ S. Falani in provincia Cassellensi in Hibernia in persona Malachiæ, nobilis et sacerdotis ejusdem Provinciæ.” On the 22nd of August, 1576, he was translated to Kilmacduagh. Dr. Cornelius O'Mulrian was appointed his successor on the same day, and lived till the year 1617.†

10.—*Conclusion.*

Thus, then, so far from the old clergy of Ireland having *merged* into the reformation of Elizabeth, the succession of the Catholic hierarchy remained unbroken. True, many of the bishops were compelled to abandon the temporalities of their sees to the agents of the reformation, still they continued faithful to their spiritual charge: and surely Dr. Todd, and the other able writers whom we have named above, will not affirm that the seizing on the property which our fathers bequeathed for sacred Catholic purposes, sufficed to *merge* these faithful bishops and their flocks in the government establishment. In many dioceses, the crown did not even attempt to appoint Protestant bishops: whilst in the other dioceses where such bishops were appointed, they are proved almost invariably to have been intruders—Catholic bishops being already, by canonical authority, consecrated for these sees, and ruling by the power and in the name of the Holy Ghost, the spiritual flocks entrusted to them. As a matter of fact, it results from the preceding pages, that the *mere Irish* remained attached to the Catholic faith: with sacred discernment, they viewed each Protestant bishop as a mere official of a government which proscribed alike their name and their religion;

* Ware.

† The Burgundian List gives his appointment on 22nd August, 1579, which is merely an error of the copyist.

and though they were obliged to pay Protestant bishops as agents of the crown, they took care not to seek for spiritual food at their hands: indeed, it is quite evident, that neither the hierarchy, whether *mere Irish* or Anglo-Irish of the pale, nor the Irish people, *merged* into the so-called reformation. The theory, therefore, proposed by Dr. Todd, that the present Catholic Church of Ireland had its origin in the sixteenth century, being founded at that period by *emissaries from Spain, begging friars, and foreign priests*,* has no foundation in truth, and is in direct opposition to the genuine records of history, which prove that the Catholics of Ireland, as a body, and their clergy, remained devotedly attached to the chair of St. Peter, and that neither penal laws, nor confiscation, nor exile, nor imprisonment, nor the sword, nor the other violent and anti-Christian means employed to propagate Protestantism, could separate them from the true fold of Jesus Christ, or induce them to adopt the false teaching, or to imitate the corrupt morals of Henry and Elizabeth, of Cranmer and Brown, Curwin and Loftus, and other worthy fathers of the Reformation.

* These are the words of Dr. Todd, St. Patr. p. 244.

END OF INTRODUCTION.

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